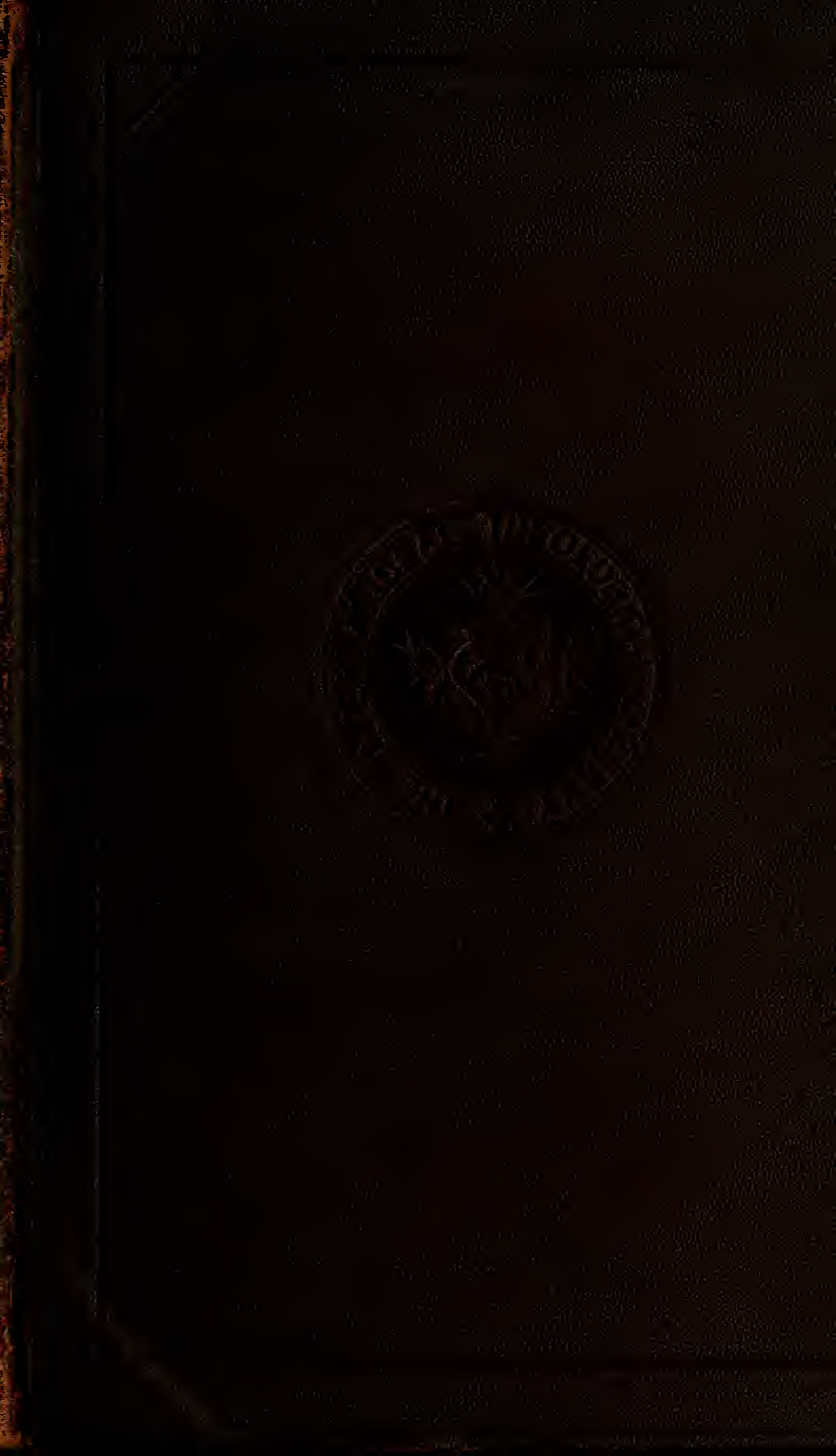








J A Mackay
Lima 7.10.24



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BY

NEWMAN SMYTH, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF 'OLD FAITHS IN NEW LIGHT,' 'THE REALITY OF FAITH,' ETC

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CHRISTIAN ETHICS

INTRODUCTION

"Let us learn to live according to Christianity," said Ignatius[1] in the second century. No simpler or better definition of Christian ethics could be given. It is the science of living according to Christianity. Its subject-matter is broad as human life; its object is to bring all the materials of life under this supreme, formative principle, "According to Christ." Hence Christian ethics is not to be regarded as an individual discipline in virtue merely, but it constitutes also a social science. It was a prayer of social Christianity that an apostle offered for the Romans: "Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus."[2] Christian ethics is the science of living well with one another according to Christ. A believer in those early days, speaking to a pagan, said of the communities of Christians, "We do not speak great things, we live them."[3] Christian ethics — this science of living great things — does not follow an abstract theory of virtue, but proceeds from a creative Person. It gathers the fruit of the Spirit of Christ. Consequently it will not be merely an intellectual exposition of the ethical maxims of Jesus and his disciples; it will seek for the interpretation and reconciliation of human life and its problems in the wisdom of the Spirit of Christ.

Christian ethics has been said by Rothe to be, "in the proper sense of the word — a history; statistics and politics

[1] Epist. ad Magn. c. x. [2] Rom. xv. 5. [3] Minucius Felix, *Octavius*, c. 38.

of the kingdom of God."[1] This ethics springs from an historical revelation, and is to be realized through a Christian history. It presupposes a Christian development of the world, — an evolution under Christian laws of life and for a Christian consummation. Its discussions must follow, therefore, an historical method. Christianity, according to which we are to learn to live, is an historical development, and the ethics of it are likewise the fruit of processes of Christian growth. Hence Christian ethics has been a progressive, and is still an unfinished, science. We are not yet made perfect either in our Christian life, or in our knowledge or science of the life.

Moral philosophy has often been rendered too formal and fruitless because it has lacked the historical spirit, — a defect which characterized generally the ethics of the last century, and particularly the ethics of Kant. In his critical hands moral science was emptied of actuality. Modern scientific ethics has done excellent service in recalling moral philosophy from this lifeless realm of abstractions, and restoring to it vitality, color, and warmth as a moral history of real life. Christian ethics agrees with the scientific in starting from what Mr. Leslie Stephen insists is the proper ground of "facts of observation";[2] it differs from scientific ethics by searching for its premises and finding its laws in the observed facts of the Christian moral consciousness and its historical development.[3]

The object of Christian ethics, accordingly, is not to discover a philosophy of virtue, but to bring to adequate interpretation the Christian consciousness of life. We are to seek in this inquiry to understand in its principles, its relations, and its activities, the Christian moral consciousness of life. While Christian ethics is thus in its source and method an historical science, it cannot, however, be

[1] *Theologische Ethik*, vol. iv. s. 14. [2] *Science of Ethics*, p. 36.

[3] Schleiermacher defined Christian ethics as follows: "The Christian doctrine of morals should be the presentation of the communion with God which is conditioned upon communion with Christ the Redeemer, so far as it is the motive of all acts of the Christian; it can be nothing else than a description of that manner of action which proceeds from the supremacy of the Christian determined, religious self-consciousness." — *Christliche Sitte*, s. 33.

limited entirely to the historical revelation which has been given in the Scriptures; for the new-creative life and power of Christ have worked, and are still working, in all the spheres of human life, towards a Christian goal of history; the Christian revelation is also a prophecy of the world to come. Christian ethics becomes thus a science not only of the biblical morality, but also of the whole moral development and aim of humanity according to Christ; it is the science of the moral contents, progress, and ends of human life under the formative Christian Ideal. Christian ethics must look on towards an ethical eschatology, as well as proceed from an ethical history. It will be a comprehensive survey, from the moral point of view, of the founding, upbuilding, and promised completion of the kingdom of God.

I. CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND METAPHYSICS

All ethics involve some metaphysics; for ethics is the science of well-being, and well-being involves being. Ethics presents as its subject-matter an adjective which qualifies a noun; a moralist who should seize the adjective without reference to the noun — who would understand what is well without relation to what is being — grasps but the shadow and misses the substance.

The profoundest problems of ethics and metaphysics are not separated in the simplest moral experiences of life. And the attempt to construct an ethical theory without any well-considered metaphysical basis is apt to issue not in a moral science without assumptions, but in an ethics which becomes confused in philosophical doubts.[1]

We have an ethical interest in determining, so far as we possibly can, whether there is any moral reality beneath

[1] Mr. Leslie Stephen, for example, seeks to write a *Science of Ethics* independently of metaphysics. But in his concluding chapter, while struggling to keep clear of metaphysical problems, he lays down his own opinion of "ontologies" and "sound metaphysics"! (pp. 447–9). He remarks that he might be content "to build upon the solid earth. You may, if you please, go down to the elephant or the tortoise" (p. 446). But how does he *know* that the earth is solid on which he builds? That is a question of metaphysics.

the moral appearance of our world. It is an ethical question which runs at once into metaphysics, whether all morality is simply phenomenal or not. The ethical interest of life is not satisfied by an easy avoidance of this question. Indeed, ethics and metaphysics may be regarded as the two sides of our way of approach towards the last realities of our existence.

Christian ethics, therefore, does not reject all metaphysical grounds for ethics. It starts rather with a Christian conception of being, and its theistic significance. It assumes that God is, and man from God. Certain general theistic assumptions will underlie our special discussion of Christian ethics.

II. CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND PHILOSOPHICAL ETHICS

While Christian ethics finds, as has just been said, its immediate source and special sphere in the moral consciousness of that Christian humanity which is created anew after the Spirit, it is also to be observed that Christian ethics, in order that it may be scientific, must include the facts of man's natural moral life, and should not fall into contradiction with the reasonable conclusions of philosophical ethics. For the second creation according to Christ fulfils the first creation, and the end of grace cannot prove contrary to the beginning of nature. The spiritual is to the natural as the grain which ripens in the sunshine is to the seed that dies in the earth.[1] The Christian character, in its perfect idea, is the nature of man completely ethicized through the indwelling of the Spirit. Christianity claims power to conserve and to complete all natural good in the kingdom of heaven. Hence the science of Christian ethics will comprehend the truths of natural science; and its moral interpretations of life will harmonize with all our possible knowledge.

Christian ethics, in its idea and aim, is something more than a special branch of moral philosophy; it is ethics in the highest — ethics raised to the highest power — the

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 37, 46.

last and fullest moral interpretation of the world and its history. The facts of the natural history of man, and the sifted conclusions of philosophical ethics, will be its assumptions and its postulates. It will gather these up, and bring them to the light of the purest and most luminous moral consciousness of all history — even the mind that was in Christ Jesus. These philosophical postulates with which we must begin in writing on Christian ethics, will themselves be subjected in turn to new, searching tests, and to severe verification, in the focus of the Christian consciousness of man. The effort to understand and to reflect truly the regenerate spiritual mind of humanity will throw back light upon the natural moral consciousness of man.

Scientific ethics so-called — the ethics of naturalism — does not render a complete induction of the moral facts of our history unless it proceeds to include also in its generalizations the ethics of the best Christian consciousness of life. Until that is done, ethical theories and maxims have not been brought to the light and submitted to the search of the clearest and highest moral authority known on earth. Yet nothing is more common than for writers who approach the inquiry into the moral history of our world from the paths of natural science, to ignore altogether the Christian significance and the Christian tests of moral ideas, as though the ethical consciousness of Christianity were but a moral episode in human history — a phenomenon by itself; as though the whole Christian consciousness, with its rich ethical contents, stood on some side-track of evolution, and were therefore something to be passed by in the scientific pursuit of truth with scarce a word of notice, or to be left as a special subject for the investigation of those who are inclined to it.

But this confident exclusiveness of naturalistic ethics is an unscientific habit, as it would be unscientific for a chemist to refuse to apply any test by means of which his combinations might be subjected to further analysis, or as it would seem absurd for an investigator to choose to make explorations by moonlight instead of by sunlight.

Man's moral nature is to be read in all possible lights, and to be brought to the interpretation of its own holiest indwelling truth. Man at his highest moral power and in his intensest spiritual consciousness is the ethical fact to be investigated and explained. A satisfactory account of him at a lower moral point is not an account of man at his supreme moral height. A thoroughly scientific ethics must not only be adequate to the common moral sense of men, but prove true also to the moral consciousness of the Son of man. No ethics has right to claim to be thoroughly scientific, or to offer itself as the only science of ethics possible to us in our present experience, until it has sought to enter into the spirit of Christ, and has brought all its analysis and theories of man's moral life to the light of the luminous ethical personality of Jesus Christ. The conscience of man which is formed and enlightened by the Spirit of Christ is a psychological fact to be scientifically measured, and to be related to other facts. Possibly some ethical assumptions and theories, which may seem to be sufficient interpretations or generalizations of man's moral life at lower stages and in less developed periods of his history, may be found to be inadequate when the fullest, highest, and clearest moral consciousness is to be explained.

Christian ethics, therefore, by its interpretation of the most ethicized life of man may gain right and power to speak the last word amid contending theories of moral philosophy. Such authority to speak the final word can be denied to it only by proving that the Christian moral consciousness is not the most ethicized consciousness known to man; that the regenerate mind is a degenerate mind; that the Son of man is not man at his moral best. If on the whole, and fairly interpreted, the Christian ideal of the kingdom of God is the highest ethical conception — the moral type of society most fitted to survive — which the development of the world has as yet attained; if the Christian consciousness, taken largely, is the best product of the moral history of this earth; then Christian ethics, which is the science of this regenerate moral

experience of man, has authority as the highest court of appeal among the philosophies of morals.

The relation of Christian to philosophical ethics is thus seen to be twofold; it presupposes and it judges them. What an apostle claimed for the spiritual man is true likewise of the science of man's spiritual experience in its ethical deliverances: "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man."[1] The spiritual man is here regarded as the man in whom the highest and truest life of man comes to self-consciousness, and therefore he can be judged by no man. Hence ethics is to receive its final form and clarified contents in the moral consciousness of the spiritual man. There is no further appeal from the judgment of the spiritual mind of humanity.

Although philosophical and Christian ethics may be separated and pursued as independent disciplines, the distinction between them, as Dorner has observed,[2] is only empirical, and not a necessary opposition; the difference tends to disappear in proportion as the philosophy of an age becomes Christianized, and the Christianity of an age becomes rational and real. No necessary and permanent antagonism can be admitted between reason and faith, and consequently the ethics of reason seeks for fulfilment in the ethics of faith.

III. CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND PSYCHOLOGY

Ethics is sometimes treated as a branch of psychology. These studies are too vitally related to be held apart even for analytical purposes without peril of loss. An ethics without psychological assumptions is an impossibility. These assumptions may be concealed; they may not have been thought out; but there is no moral treatise, not even the most clearly scientific, which is not permeated through and through by the psychology which the writer consciously or unconsciously, intelligently or with-

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 15. [2] *System der Christlichen Sittenlehre*, ss. 17, 24, 28.

out knowledge, has adopted and holds. All the problems of human conduct involve theories of the will, and cannot be solved without some inquiry into moral motives, — that is, without the aid of psychology.

Christian ethics cannot claim freedom from subjection to the processes and tests of modern psychology; it will have also its own contribution to make to this study as it brings out the psychology of the regenerated consciousness. There may be some truths of psychological significance to be learned from the processes of spiritual experience and the growth and increased fruitfulness of mental life under the influence of the Spirit of Christ. The results, moreover, of the experiments of physiological psychology (which in their way are interesting and suggestive, although as yet not illuminative where knowledge would be most welcome) are to be read in the light which may be kindled in the recesses of our being through the operation of the human mind and will in the freest and most powerful spiritual acts and self-determinations. At this preliminary stage of our discussion we wish to acknowledge the constant and intimate relation which will appear throughout between Christian ethics and psychological investigations. Instead of regarding it as a virtue to write an ethics without psychological assumptions, we deem it to be the far more excellent way to gain an ethics which shall justify itself before any competent psychology.

IV. RELATION OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND THEOLOGY

In the scholasticism of the middle ages ethics was treated in connection with dogmatics, and in subordination to the theology of the Church. The natural virtues, according to Aristotle or Plato, were clumsily joined to the supernatural graces according to Thomas Aquinas. Until the unity and continuity of the natural and the supernatural had been realized in some profounder and simpler Christian philosophy, the true and intimate relation of nature and grace in ethics could not be apprehended. Conse-

quently the mediæval ethics presented a series of labored efforts to divide the moral domain of life between the world and the Church, and to determine with many definitions the metes and bounds of the moral and the theological virtues. The dualism between the natural and the supernatural, which characterized the scholastic philosophy, ran also as a widening chasm through the ethics of the Church. Across it casuistry sought to throw its questionable bridges; beyond the common duties which are required of all men, theology found room for works of supererogation and the "evangelical counsels"; — for acts which are not absolutely required by the law, but which may be deemed advisable as possessed of some supermoral merit.

The introduction and pursuit of moral philosophy as a distinct study marked in the early literature of Protestantism the rise of a new and powerful tendency which was not to be subjected to the authority of the Church. Rothe regards it as an epoch-making event when George Calixtus constructed a moral philosophy independently of the Church.[1] Certainly it would be idle now to think of forcing ethics back under the control of dogmatic theology. The moral consciousness of our age has grown peculiarly impatient of Church dogma. But can ethics escape entirely from the touch of theological influence? What is the true relation between Christian ethics and theology?

In the gospels we observe that the teaching of Jesus is ethical and religious rather than metaphysical and theological. His teaching involves, it is true, a divine metaphysics; but it is directly ethical and religious rather than theological or systematic. Dogmas may be logically derived from many of Jesus' words; but immediately, as he spake them, they were spirit and they were life. His words bring to light the primary and essential ethical relations between God and man. The two commandments, in which Jesus summed up the law and the prophets, centre upon a word of simple and supreme ethical signifi-

[1] *Theologische Ethik*, vol. i. s. 15, Anm. 2.

cance, — love. It is by no means to be overlooked that Jesus' moral teachings were at the same time religious; that the morality of the gospels is pervaded throughout with the religious spirit; but it is to be noticed that the more distinctively theological truths, such as the Lord's unique relation to the Father, and man's relations to God and knowledge of Him, are approached in Jesus' teaching on the moral rather than the metaphysical side; are expressed in the language of moral experience and measured in terms of ethical value. The religious teaching of the gospels is simple and universally intelligible because it is instinct with moral life and appeals directly to the moral consciousness of men.

The more dogmatic teaching of the epistles rests on this religious-ethical truth of the gospels. Reason is called sooner or later to think out ethical-religious truths under metaphysical conceptions, and the dogmatic theology of the Church is the reasonable endeavor to harmonize the truths of Christianity in a system of thought. But whatever may be the function of theology, the primary ethical elements of religion should be distinguished, and not allowed to become lost or confounded, in any system of divinity which may be built up philosophically, or taught with authority in the creeds of the Church. Christian ethics must be allowed to follow closely, and should remain true to the ethical-religious consciousness, without prevention or prejudice from Christian dogmatics. Moreover, whatever postulates Christian ethics may borrow from Christian theology, it must bring these to its own moral tests and judgment. We cannot consent to lower the Christian conscience before any churchly tradition, or to yield for a moment the Christian sense of right to any supposed dogmatic interest. The question, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" is an ancient appeal directly to the religious conscience, which Christian ethics should always keep open and sacred. Even in the most authoritative period of the reign of Church dogma, this direct appeal to the Christian moral consciousness was never wholly closed and forgotten. Augustine was not

unmoved by the living voice of God in the soul of his churchly orthodoxy; and John Calvin did not push his crushing logic along the ways of the divine decrees beyond all restraint of the moral Christian sense. A Puritan theologian of the seventeenth century, wearied of "the contentious learning" of his times, wrote a plea for "Practical Divinity" as "of far greater concernment unto all," and appealed directly to the "life of God in the soul of a believer" as the test of truth.[1] Reformations have grown out of the ethical protest of the Christian mind against inherited dogmas. Old theology is always becoming new in the vitalizing influence of ethics. The Church will not long refuse to bring any article of its faith to the test of its most Christlike sense of love and fairness. It is reason enough for doubting and for restudying any traditional teaching or received word of doctrine, if it be felt to harass or to confuse the Christian conscience of an age. Nothing can abide as true in theology which does not prove its genuineness under the ever renewed searching of the Christian moral sense; nothing is permanent fruit of the teaching of Christ which does not show itself to be morally Christlike. Even a primitive Christian tradition might be insufficient authority for imputing to Christ, and including in the doctrine of Christianity, any word of teaching which should prove to be contrary to the character and spirit of the Christ of the gospels. Still less can we allow in Christian ethics any dogmatic belief which would put in bonds the Christian ethical principle itself; — as, for instance, the tenet that morality is dependent upon the divine will, that the distinction between right and wrong is a created distinction, which God might have willed otherwise. Christian ethics cannot consent to commit suicide in any supposed interest of theology.

[1] John Dury, *An Earnest Plea for Gospel Communion*, London, 1654. The whole passage referred to is too long to quote. The following sentences illustrate its quite modern tone: "Godliness, therefore, which is the practice of divine Truth, is the measure of all intellectual truths; for whatever matter of knowledge is not proportionate, subordinate, and subservient unto the production of the life of God in the soul of a Believer, is not to be received as a divine Truth" (pp. 5 sq.).

This assertion of the authority of the ethical in its own domain, is not at the same time a denial of all dependence of Christian ethics upon Christian theology. A necessary and legitimate subordination and service of the former to the latter is to be recognized in two relations: (1) Christian ethics finds material for its science in the truths which are presented in the person, life, and teaching of Christ. (2) Christian ethics has before it the task of bringing Christian beliefs to moral interpretation and harmony. In this respect it is a servant of theology.

As ethics in general cannot proceed in entire independence of men's beliefs concerning themselves and the universe in which they live, so Christian ethics is to be an application of Christian beliefs to the conduct of life. We cannot construct a Christian theory of living without constant reference to the Christian ideas of being. While the imitation of Christ is to be distinguished from the intellectual conception of the nature or offices of Christ, still to follow Christ in his life implies some belief in the worthiness of the Christ to go before us as Master and Lord. And these Christian beliefs, as already observed, will be purified and enriched in following the Christ. There is light in love.

While Christian ethics finds its subject-matter in the same Christian consciousness of man from which theology derives its materials for dogmatic construction, each of these sciences will regard the whole contents of the Christian consciousness (including historic revelation) from its own point of view. Ethics holds the contents of Christian faith in immediate and constant relation to the will and character of the Christian man and the Christian society. Dogmatics is concerned with the Christian truths as materials of knowledge to be combined with all our knowledge in a Christian conception of the world and God.

The distinction has been made by Wuttke (*Christian Ethics*, vol i. p. 22) that ethics is predominantly a subjective science, while dogmatics is predominantly objective; that the latter furnishes the materials of knowledge, while the former has to do with the relation of these known materials of Christian life to the will and the ends of conduct. There is

evident truth in this distinction, yet we cannot admit that the moral consciousness is simply subjective: there is a moral knowing as well as willing; there is a knowing for willing and through willing, a knowledge to be gained in willing. The will and the mind are not two separate compartments of being. An analysis of our mental states into their elements is not a true description of the living consciousness in the integrity and unity of its vital processes. The ethical consciousness is a knowing in willing, and a willing in knowing; it has objective validity (if that may be allowed in any sense to man's knowledge) as well as subjective worth or obligation. Moral knowing is real knowing, if the life of man touches at any point the realities of things.

Christian ethics naturally follows Christian theology, both because it assumes a certain acquaintance with the Christian truths, and also because it offers a further revision of theological conceptions in the light of the Christian moral consciousness. All things are to be brought to the ethical test of the life of the Christ. "But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."[1] The ethics of the Spirit is the final judgment; the life is the light of men.

V. THE RELATION OF ETHICS AND RELIGION

Scarcely any question in moral philosophy has been so repeatedly brought into discussion as the question of the dependence of morality on religion. It has been often claimed, on the one hand, that morality has its beginnings and derives its sanctions from religion and religious motives, and is the consequence even of the revealed will of God. On the other hand, it is asserted that moral codes are social in their origin; that men must learn to live together by some rule, that is, morally; and that even without the guidance and help of religious ideas and customs, social necessity would compel some moral organization and control of communities of men. Positivists, moreover, have not been slow to discover defects in men's moral codes, ancient and modern, which may be attributed to the retardation or corruption of ethical ideas by religious traditions; and it has been claimed not only that

[1] Rom. viii. 9.

morality may be entirely independent of religion for its basis of obligation, but also that it might often profitably dispense with added religious sanctions. Some educated and ethical souls no longer require the support of religious beliefs for the honorable conduct of life, although, according to Mr. Spencer,[1] there still may be some lingering popular need for the enforcement of moral duties by religious fears. Mr. Mill admits the great services which belief in the supernatural has rendered to morality in "the early stages of human development";[2] but he remarks that "early religious teaching has owed its power over mankind rather to its being early than to its being religious."[3]

Positivism itself, however, while banishing the ordinary religious beliefs from the moral sphere, cannot rule its own kingdom without sooner or later inventing some makeshift for a religion. Comte, as is well known, at the close of his positive philosophy, gave back to poetry and the worship of humanity the religious motives and sanctions which he had banished with the age of theology. And Mr. Mill himself, notwithstanding his reluctance to follow Comte in the new cultus of humanity, nevertheless, in the same essay in which he would prove that morality is no longer dependent on religious beliefs, could not quite dispense with the name religion for the supremacy of the moral sentiments which he thinks are destined to survive as the worthiest and the most useful. "To call these sentiments," he remarks, "by the name morality, exclusively of any other title, is claiming too little for them. They are a real religion;" etc.[4] So positivism, after escaping from the age of theology, borrows the old name, and ends its days by dreaming of an ideal sentiment which is to be its religion. Naturalistic ethics, in spite of itself, cannot rest content without discovering or inventing something to answer for human life the purpose of a religion. But a philosophy which finds itself compelled to spell some common nouns with capitals, in order that it may worship them, can hardly deny the moral necessity of some religion.

[1] *First Principles*, s. 32, p. 117.
[2] *Utility of Religion*, p. 100.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 83.
[4] *Ibid.* p. 109.

1. If we turn to history in the desire to determine the actual relation between religion and morals, we observe (so far as we have historical materials for our judgment), that some religion and some morality are usually found existing together among men; there are few, if any, clear and decided instances of the presence of either of these factors without some existence also of the other. The two have grown together, and, so far as we can discover, have usually sprung up together. Throughout known history the two powers of human life, religion and morality, have been co-existent and co-operative. It may be true, as Mr. Mill contends, that morals in Greece derived little benefit from, and indeed became exceptionally independent of, religious beliefs; yet the political morals of Greece were religious at least in their recognition of the social order as ordained by the gods; and the ideas of law and nemesis were not irreligious conceptions in the Greek ethics.

In Israel religious and moral obligation coalesced, and the history of Israel is at once a history of the development of morals and of a progressive revelation of God. The divine evolution of Israel proceeds on parallel lines of moral and religious growth. Indeed, these two elements, the moral and the religious, have been so interwoven and blended in the whole texture and color of the historical development and life of humanity, that it is not easy to separate them at any particular point, and to discern with precision what results should be attributed to the one factor and what to the other element. The earliest and least degrees of the religious consciousness contain implicitly some moral potency and manifest some moral reactions; and, conversely, an awakening of the moral consciousness is usually accompanied by a profound stirring of the religious depths of human nature. While religious teaching has direct influence on the morals of a people, it is equally true that any advance of moral ideas will become reformatory of religious doctrines. No religious teaching can remain, if its idea of God is discovered to be immoral. All attempts absolutely to divorce these two original and allied elements of man's being, his religious

faith and his moral sense, seem to be impossible; by some Power, creative of our nature, they have been so joined together that man cannot put them asunder.

2. This general interdependence of morals and religion we must not, however, press so far as to assert that either is derived from the other, or has no independence of the other.

When we have admitted that there is an historical and an organic correlation between the religious and moral elements of human life, it does not follow that we can at once go farther and declare either that religion is only a larger reflection on the universe of man's inward moral feeling, or, on the other hand, that human morality is absolutely dependent for its power upon conscious belief in God and immortality, or any of the specific truths of Christianity. For no ethical characteristic of the present age is more familiar than the existence of high moral development and devotion to pure moral ideals in individuals who have broken with all religious traditions, and who hold in abeyance, if they have not lost, their faith in a personal God and their personal immortality.

In individual examples, a large and lofty morality is seen to survive without obvious religious root or support. It is another question, however, whether this apparent independence of individuals from religious motives could have been sustained except in a society which had long been prepared and enriched for such exceptional moral growths by the influences of religious beliefs; — these persons have drawn nourishment even from the decay of the faiths in which the seeds of their moral life were first planted: and it is a further and still more important question whether a vigorous and fruitful national morality could survive in a soil where all the springs of religion had become dry. We have in history no circle of facts large enough to justify the generalization that society can give up all religion and eventually prosper. The historic indications seem to point the other way. Loss of religious faith (as distinct from dogmas) among the people has never yet been a sign of increasing moral vitality. Yet while there is no moral

history of a people to justify the confident assertion that religion may be safely cast aside as an outgrown garment in the future progress of mankind, it may be admitted not only that individual instances may be adduced of the continuance of moral excellence after the loss of religious beliefs, but also that a considerable degree of moral attainment and social firmness may be conceived as possible, at least for a while, even in the absence of definite or positive popular belief in a divine Governor or a future state. The political morality of the Grecian systems of ethics was not directly dependent upon the religious ideas amid which they grew up, and we can keep the one while discarding the other. Man is by nature a moral, as he is by nature a political being. "Conscience," as Dr. Martineau has remarked, "may act as human, before it is discovered to be divine."[1]

We must recognize, therefore, alike in the interest of morality and religion a certain relative independence of each from the other. Each has life in itself; each possesses its own sphere, and is clothed with its own authority. Neither can be absolutely identified with the other, or subordinated to the other. Religion, while it must bring its whole conception of the world and idea of God to the test of the life of each succeeding age, is in itself more than morality, and will refuse to be reduced entirely to strict ethical terms. Religion represents a personal relationship — man's sonship from God's Fatherhood; and the trust and obedience which religion enjoins are personal and vital relations which cannot be comprehended under any impersonal sovereignty of law or right.

On the other hand, morality as the condition and law of social well-being may be studied and developed without constant reference to the religious questions of the origin or the ultimate significance of human society and man's sense of moral obligation. Moreover, it has often been indispensable to moral progress that the encumbrance of dead and burdensome religious beliefs should be thrown off, and that the science of human well-being should be pur-

[1] *Religion*, vol. i. p. 20.

sued with independent ethical investigation. Whenever the Church hinders such free development of social science, it is in need itself of ethical reformation. The true unity of the religious and the moral requires that each power should work freely in its own sphere.

3. Religion and ethics, while thus relatively independent, are complementary elements of man's life. Ultimately they belong together. Each originally implies the other, and in the perfected life both are made one.

We cannot think any ethical question out without raising some religious question. We cannot make any religious belief real unless we put moral contents into it. Alike as a good to be desired, a virtue to be attained, or a duty to be rendered, religion itself becomes a part of morality, and belongs to a true and complete ethics of life. And, conversely, every moral term — such as approbation, duty, freedom, and any other ethical concept — has its religious side and passes easily over into a religious meaning. The apparent dualism is not real, for morals and religion are the two relations and aspects of one unfolding spiritual life, which, although thus logically separable, is not divided in the unity of the personal consciousness.

4. Ethics and Religion require a similar transcendental postulate. Man's rational consciousness alike on its moral and its religious side has a transcendent environment; and our sense of absolute dependence and of absolute obligation imply the same source of our humanity in the Eternal One from whom we have come.

Philosophic doubt may refuse to receive any definition of the supreme Power or Origin alike of our consciousness of personal being and moral obligation; a man may remain, if he will, an agnostic both in his ethical and his religious consciousness of himself; but the primary and essential fact is not to be denied that our human sense of being and of well-being touches something, whether known or unknown, beyond itself; faces some larger environment; exists in conscious dependence on some Being and Good which were before us, and which are greater than we.

For purposes of analysis and investigation, it is true,

any subject may be isolated from its environment; — an organ or a piece of tissue may be separated from the body, or one body may be held apart from the entire system of organic relations in which it exists. But we can only subject dead tissue to this analysis. We have to take the life before we can divide any organ with our scalpels, or examine tissue under our microscopes. Similarly the moral consciousness of man may be separated from his whole consciousness of spiritual being, and for purposes of analysis, and the ascertainment of certain definite results, it may be investigated without any reference to its relations to the super-sensible and transcendent environment of man's spiritual life. But it is the dead, not the living moral consciousness, which can be so dissected. And when the results of the analysis thus obtained are confidently presented as the whole contents of man's moral nature, and their meagreness pronounced to be the entire truth which may be known of man's being and destiny, then we need only refer to the living moral consciousness in the actual life of humanity as the witness for other and higher elements, not unknown to the "vital soul," which are real and vibrant, and not to be silenced in the heart of man. Indeed, it is a travesty of the scientific method in ethics to regard the individual man as a part of the "social tissue," and then to refuse to take the slightest account of such impulsions or implications as affect that social tissue through its relation to some larger spiritual environment; to refuse even to raise the inquiry whether that social tissue presents evidence of belonging itself to some greater, cosmical unity, or spiritual order of being, in which humanity exists, and in the all-encompassing relations of which we live and move and have our being. It would not be scientific to regard an organ as separate from the body, ignoring either the adaptations of the organ to the body, or the possible reactions of the body on the organ. Yet Mr. Leslie Stephen holds that scientific ethics has to do with observed facts, not with transcendental considerations.[1]

[1] *Science of Ethics*, p. 36.

But the transcendental principles may be resident in, and reveal themselves as the vital implications of, the observed facts of the "social tissue,"—as the life of the whole body pulses through each particular organ. We do not get rid scientifically of the transcendental simply by shutting our eyes to the signs and evidences of it. A question of the first ethical interest is, whether our human moral consciousness has any organic relation with a cosmical moral order? whether it is in its living movement and power wholly of this earth earthy? Are we quite through with the known or at least partly disclosed truth of the moral life of humanity, when we have observed the relations of the individual cells in the social tissue in which, by the evolution of life, they have been combined? Are there no nerve forces running through this human tissue which bring into it excitations from without, by which every moment the internal processes are affected and even its structural formation may be modified? We have not completed a true scientific study of ethics so long as we have evaded the investigation of any and every trace we may find of the existence of a moral ontological environment, and the felt influences in the life of man of the larger moral universe in which his life may have part and share.

We can pursue the study of terrestrial physics as a separate discipline, but we cannot have a complete physical description of this earth without some astronomy. The natural history of the earth runs back into the star-dust. We cannot understand the formation of the world, or its present stability, without assuming at least the first principles of heaven's law and order. So ethics without any transcendental assumptions is like physics without astronomy. Ethics is not complete without some attempt to set human conduct and history in its real cosmical environment. Otherwise the most influential and persistent moral factors are left untouched and unexplained. An adequate and resolute science of ethics will require us, not to drop with contemptuous indifference the high task, but to think out to the uttermost the metaphysical and

ontological implications of ethics. Should the ethical field be abandoned entirely to writers who are content to close their eyes to all transcendental suggestions of moral experience, then the whole higher interest of ethical inquiries, as it has been felt by the great moralists and philosophers from Plato down, would be forfeited, and forfeited too at the demand of a partial science to satisfy a partial method, at the cost of ethical courage, thoroughness, and persistency.

A moral philosopher like Mr. Green in his approach to ethical problems from the spiritual side, and his willingness to learn their spiritual significance, has as much warrant for his appearance on the ethical field, and as much occasion for the use of his philosophic method of inquiry into ethical facts, as Mr. Stephen has for his naturalistic pursuit of moral inquiries. For the ethical field lies open in both directions, — towards nature and towards spirit, — and neither gate of it, that looking into the natural, or that opening towards the spiritual, can be regarded as closed by a truly scientific investigator.

The moral ideal — our haunting human sense of some supreme good — contains in itself a certain super-historical, if not supernatural truth and grace: it has always shone before men as an ideal not realized as yet — the vision of something diviner to be loved and followed — a dream of some perfection yet to be revealed beyond the conception of the human heart. The moral ideal as a fact within our experience is also a fact which has not been given entirely from our experience. The ideal of humanity is itself above the past or present experience of humanity. It rises over the exalted spirits of our race, like the dawn on the mountains, from beyond our horizons. Hence the contents of the moral ideal cannot be fully determined inductively from history.[1]

[1] Ulrici argues at length that it is impossible to derive the ethical ideas from experience; the idea, he maintains, of the perfect form, or the perfect man, is not derived *through* experience, although not *without* experience. — *Gott und der Mensch*, vol. ii. s. 81 ff. Mr. Green reasons that it is impossible to give a definition of the supreme good because a man "cannot know what his capabilities are till they are realized." — *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 204. There is

Ethics cannot be comprehended in all its elemental facts, vital forces, and living processes, if the presence and felt influence in an age of ideal truth and being which history has not contained, are not recognized and revered. For humanity exists, self-consciously, as something greater than its present realization, and for ideal ends of being In the noblest moral consciousness there is some presentiment of worlds unrealized as yet. Humanity not only exists in itself, but also, to use the fine apostolic phrase, "unto all the fulness of God."[1]

Man's moral consciousness in its spiritual suggestiveness requires interpretation as a prophecy, besides critical understanding as an historical record. Conscience is a revelation as truly as it is a history. Ethics therefore cannot be thought through without some exercise of prophetic insight. Moral science, as has been admitted, begins with observed facts, and should follow its own methods of investigation independently of religion; but after all proper historical and critical data of ethics have been gathered and sifted, the spirit of the whole volume of man's moral history remains to be discerned and followed. The empirical opens all around towards the supernal. Morality finds fulfilment in religion. Irreligion, whether in thought or life, is sign of arrested moral development, not of a complete moral science or an experience of life rounded fully out.

5. Religion, consequently, will be the fulfilment and the

and must be something yet to be revealed, because not yet realized, in the idea of the *summum bonum*. The highest good is thus in part historical, and in part super-historical. Purely empirical ethics does not do justice, and on its narrow range of observed facts cannot do justice, to this undefinable but powerful element in the moral idealization of life.

[1] Eph. iii. 19. In this connection the words of Principal Caird are worth quoting: "Moreover, in this very fact that thought is the form of an infinite content is involved this further contrast with the tendencies of the lower nature, that whilst the latter are self-contained and self-sufficing, thought is the silent prophecy of an ideal which makes satisfaction with the present or the actual (or rather with the present or the actual into which no deeper signification has been infused) forever impossible. Appetite and desire have no ideal. . . . But that which makes man a spiritual being makes him also a restless being. Reason is the secret of a divine discontent." — *Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 267-268.

inspiration of ethics. It enlarges the conception of life, and it enhances the moral motive of life.

This earth seems a small space, and this life but a moment of time for such beings as we, with our powers of thinking and willing, our capacity for achievement, and our consciousness of love. The moral view of life is circumscribed and broken off at every point, if this world be the whole sphere of our possible activity, and this life the end of all our quest for the supreme good. Men may walk indeed circumspectly on this solid earth, although they may have been born blind, and no stars shine for them from afar. And, as already admitted, we might find firm footing on the moral permanence of things, even though we had no spiritual vision or hope of worlds unrealized as yet. But religion opens larger prospects to duty. If ethics are regarded as the earthly science of life, then religion is the moral astronomy of it. While bent on the tasks of the former, we need the outlook and the uplift of the latter. The religious consciousness encircles and completes the moral consciousness of man around the whole horizon of his life, bending over every field of duty, as the heavens encompass and comprehend the earth. Not to have any outlook of religious thought and far prospect of a boundless hope as we pursue our daily tasks, were like living on an earth without a sky. One may do his daily work with little thought indeed of the overarching heaven; but the sky is always there, — the far, pure background for all man's life on the earth, — and some enlarging and quieting sense of it will pervade our daily consciousness of toil and labor under the sun. Duty is not a task given man to be laboriously done at the bottom of a dark mine; rather it is a life to be healthfully and joyously led under the broad sky in the clear sunshine of God. In obeying duty, because it is duty, we may say in Schleiermacher's spirit, "The religious feelings are to be as a holy music which shall accompany all the action of man; he should do all with religion, not from religion."[1] Though

[1] See Jodl, *Geschichte der Ethik*, vol. ii. s. 186.

the immediate motive be duty, religion may be its happy accompaniment always.

It is obvious, moreover, that any enlargement of one's view of life will prove also to be an expansion and exhilaration of the moral motive of his conduct. Since religion lends large horizon to duty, it is evident that it must also quicken and enhance the moral vitality of human nature. It will become necessary for us to inquire with some particularity in a subsequent chapter what are the moral forces in the life of humanity and its development; and whether a sufficient moral dynamics can be found independently of all religious power. At this point, however, of our introduction to our study it is enough to notice that the pre-eminent claim of religion, and of the Christian religion above all others, is that it is the moral power of God in history. Christianity is nothing if it be not the power of the Holy Ghost in the life of man. It claims to be the sufficient motive-power to energize and renew the heart; and, through the resistless processes of divine grace, to bring to final issue in some perfect good the humanity which is now devitalized, broken, and despoiled of its ideal virtue by the lawless working of sin and the fearful triumph of death.

Religion is thus related to ethics as hope is to performance; as faith in the future and its promise is to present failure and incompleteness. Granting, as we have done, that there may be a certain independence of human morality from all religious sanctions, nevertheless it may fairly be asked whether if severe scientific truth should compel us to blot out the whole religious ideality and aspiration of ethics, humanity would then long care to preserve even those pure moral fragments of its life which would be left; whether from the near interest and the immediate prospect the motive for noble achievement and for deathless love could be drawn with anything approaching that power and unconquerableness of spirit which have been witnessed in the faith of the martyrs, the zeal of reformers, and the joy of the saints, who have endured as seeing Him who is invisible, and who have looked for a better, that is,

a heavenly country. Certainly thus far in history the triumphal chapters of human progress have been written in faith. Without some moral faith which rises to the height and breathes the spirit of religious devotion, we have little reason to expect such future triumphal arches to be raised as we find consecrated to faith in that grand eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, and to behold the evils and the sins of the world led in captivity beneath them. Natural moral science, pure and simple, untouched by religion and untinged by a single ray of hope from beyond, has indeed its necessary work to do, its sober economic commission to fulfil. As it is called to weigh social utilities, to judge what is truly beneficial to the social whole, what hurts or invigorates the social tissue, it has a needed and valuable work to accomplish; it is its task to bring to practical tests and verification the moral maxims, the jurisprudence, the public sense of justice and right of whole communities of men. Religion will accept with gratefulness this aid of the economists, and no sentiment of charity or piety should be suffered to interfere with this needed service of the most severely scientific ethics. But when all this is done, and well done, then the enlargement which the religious view of life only can afford, and the prospect which the spiritual mind alone can behold, are needed for a complete and inspiring ethical conception of life. Only from out the eternal can the temporal be largely and truly seen. The eye must be on a level with the sky to take in the whole earth and its dependence on the sun. One must rise above this world, must pass into the eternal life through faith, in order to judge this life as a whole. Only in the power and the peace of religion is the perfect vision to be gained. Ethics is finished in the religious comprehension of duty.[1] The words in which Aristotle described the contemplative happiness in which he found the noblest life might be quoted as a protest from antiquity against all modern attempts to divorce ethics and religion: "But such a life

[1] "Ethics must either perfect themselves in religion, or disintegrate themselves into Hedonism." — MARTINEAU, *Religion*, vol. i. p. 24.

would be something higher than the merely human; for one would live thus, not so far forth as he is man, but as there is in him something divine."[1]

VI. RELATION OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND ECONOMICS

There is an increasing tendency among economists to recognize ethical considerations in the action of economic forces. The reactions of the ethical motives on economic conditions are too frequent and too influential to be ignored in any induction of the laws of material welfare which shall be true to real life. It may be convenient, however, and scientifically necessary, in the determination of economic laws to keep the ethical elements, as far as possible, separate from strictly economic factors. And on the side of ethics great care should be taken not to miss economic truth. The student of Christian ethics should be a patient scholar also in the school of economic science. We must understand the material conditions and laws of human welfare if we are to become teachers of a social philosophy which shall not prove wanting amid the pressures of men's increasing needs. All sound economic science will yield its truth to be conserved in the Christian ideal of social well-being. Christian ethics comes to the laws of economics, not to destroy, but to fulfil. The importance of this recognition of the service to be sought from economics by Christian ethics will appear more fully when we shall treat of Christian social ethics.

VII. PHILOSOPHICAL POSTULATES OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

We proceed next to summarize more definitely the postulates which we derive from philosophical ethics. These postulates, which are the proper subjects of treatises of moral philosophy, and which are vindicated in the discussion of Christian theism, enter as assumptions from which we start in the study of Christian ethics. The grounds,

[1] *Nic. Ethics*, x. 7. 10.

however, on which such assumptions rest, may be briefly indicated in the statement and definition of them; they will be subjected, as already remarked, to further ethical verification, as in the course of our determination of the problems of practical morals we shall find that they show themselves fitted to the necessities of men's lives. Ethics will repeatedly bring all its assumptions to this vital test. There can be no severer verification of truth than such moral test of it in the crucible of human experience.

I. We assume that human nature is constituted for moral life.

Human nature has its existence in an ethical sphere and for moral ends of being. We assume that there is a natural capacity or basis for ethical being and life which in the ascent of nature has been reached at length and is occupied by the human race. Nature we regard as constituted for the attainment, at some point of its development, of ethical consciousness and volition; nature from the beginning exists to be ethicized and spiritualized. Matter exists ultimately for spirit, and spirit for the Holy Spirit.[1] If it be objected that this is an assumption of final causes in nature, we answer that it is assuming no more teleology than is involved in any fair and adequate statement of the facts which are already realized in nature. For as matter of fact nature has reached the willing mind and the self-conscious will. This is the human end already attained; to say that the end was involved in nature from the beginning is only to say that nature throughout has been true; that the beginning does not belie the end of nature in humanity. Nature's first courses were laid sufficiently broad for its highest attainments. How far this intention, or truth of nature to itself from beginning to end, has

[1] Rothe with profound insight urges that the question with materialism is not whether man brings a pure spirit into the world with him or not; whether man, so soon as he sees the light of the world, is a purely sensuous or a sensuous spiritual being; but the sole question is whether a being that is a merely sensuous animal from the beginning, *of the peculiar constitution of man*, in the process of the development of his animal life could *remain* a merely sensuous (*reinsinnliches*) being, with the thoroughly peculiar psychical functions which this process sets in play? "We deny this," he says, "with absolute confidence, and this denial is our spiritualism." — *Theolog. Ethik.* vol. i. s. 459.

been a conscious intention; and whether that consciousness of the end from the beginning resides within nature, or in one Mind which thinks, and one Will that holds nature to its truth and aim, — this is another question; this is a further inference which theism may draw from the observed order of the world; at present we are simply assuming as a fundamental postulate from philosophical ethics that nature was constituted for moral ends, and in man has become capable of moral life.

No theory of man's physical beginning and the lowly origin of the human species can interfere with or take away the grounds of this assumption; for here and now, however it was brought to pass, we stand on a moral plane of existence, and man is capable of a life which shapes itself according to ideal ends of being. Darwinism only offers "a larger teleology," — another tentative theory of the age-long way through which the creation has ascended to the moral order; but it does not contradict its actual rational and moral attainment. And the goal that has been gained in our present powers and capacities, is not to be involved in any mystery which may still be left, after all our science, enveloping the way in which we have come to our moral manhood.

II. Christian Ethics assumes the sense of obligation, or the authority of conscience.

The psychological inquiry concerning the nature and authority of conscience is itself modern as distinguished from classical ethics. Dr. Martineau has said, and broadly speaking the statement is true, that psychological ethics is peculiar to Christendom. In Christianity human nature, rather than nature, became the sole object of interest and investigation. The world existed for man's sake. The heavens were made to minister to man. The human soul was the one great object of the divine government. Hence landscape painting formed only the background of early and mediaeval Christian art. Naturally under this conception of the supreme importance of the human soul Christian philosophy and ethics became earnestly subjective and penetratingly introspective in their methods and aims.

Modern psychology may almost be said to be the necessary consequence of the ages of Christian faith, however independent of its parentage it may have become.

In ancient Greek philosophy, on the contrary, man existed as an integral part of nature, and Greek ethics was predominantly the study of man's life as a part of the order of nature in which he lived. Morality (as Dr. Martineau has remarked[1]) was to be determined "from the consideration of man as a natural object placed and constituted in a certain way." The Greek ethics was not a subjective affair of the moral sentiments; a man's virtue relates to the world around him, and is to be determined by a study of the conditions of his life, especially as these are given in his state or city. Notwithstanding the idealism of Plato, and the fundamental Socratic precept, know thyself, the Greek ethics and philosophy, it has been rightly observed, "preserve a predominantly objective tone." But the Christian ethics, which superseded the classic, was characterized by a fondness for introspection. Earnest effort was made to lay bare the moral secret of the soul. Within the circle of Christian thought the emphasis has been laid on the law which is written in the heart, and on the inner light. The moral intuition has been followed, and conscience obeyed as the voice of God speaking within the soul. Conscience, as Principal Shairp defined it, "is the absolute in man."[2]

Since the recent predominance, however, of scientific methods and pursuits, this psychological habit of Christian ethics has been modified, and moral philosophy has been restored to the list of the natural sciences. Scientific ethics, so-called, is a return to the ancient Greek view of man as belonging to nature, while it applies to this study new and vastly improved methods of investigation. The older utilitarianism which first began to dispute with intuitionalism on psychological ground, has more recently entrenched itself in evolutionary theories of nature. Rejecting any present or immediate utterances of the soul concerning

[1] *Types of Ethical Theory*, vol. i. p. 63.
[2] *Principal Shairp and his Friends*, p. 94.

itself as necessarily final, and recognizing no ultimate source of knowledge in psychology (for that may be itself derivative), our modern scientific ethics has sought to trace the natural history of conscience from its nebulous beginnings to its present distinct luminousness, — to write a natural history of conscience from its crude prehistoric germs up to its fullest and fairest growth and blossoming in the sensitive honor and generous devotion of the noblest souls.

The legitimacy of this endeavor, and its tentative success within its own lines, need not be denied in the interest of intuitional morals. It is true that man is an object of nature, and as such has a natural history. His moral and spiritual powers, whatever be their ultimate nature or further secret of being, have their antecedents and their environment in nature and the processes of nature. The Greek ethics did not occupy a false position, although it did not gain the highest point of view, when it studied man as an object of natural history. Nor should any light which physiology or other natural sciences may throw into the intricate and intimate processes of conscience be regarded with suspicion, as though the more we may know of man's relationship to nature, the less sure we may be of his spiritual solitariness and supremacy. On the contrary, to discover more clearly how anything has grown, may enable us to estimate more truly its worth and to distinguish it more confidently from all other things. Without entering into a minute statement of the various ingenious and plausible attempts which have been made to write the natural history of conscience, it is sufficient for our purpose to notice that they all involve this common postulate, that conscience is a compound social sentiment or judgment. It is the growth and unification of many earlier and simpler elements and conditions.

So Mr. Stephen, improving somewhat on Mr. Spencer's *Data of Ethics*, discovers that the distinction drawn between the social and the self-regarding qualities cannot possibly be ultimate;[1] and he defines morality as "a statement of the conditions of social welfare."[2] He

[1] *The Science of Ethics*, p. 96. [2] *Ibid.* p. 217.

reaches at last this singularly simple definition of so complex a phenomenon as conscience: "The moral law being, in brief, conformity to the conditions of social welfare, conscience is the name of the intrinsic motives to such conformity."[1] "The conscience is the utterance of the public spirit of the race, ordering us to obey the primary conditions of its welfare."[2]

The chief factor by which this individual-social conscience is developed, turns out to be the old and familiar friend of the utilitarians, in their efforts to conceal the apparent difference between self-love and sacrifice, — the power, namely, of sympathy. Sympathy is the tentacle by means of which the individual feels his relations to the social tissue; and conscience is his fully developed sense of well-being in the social organism. Or, as Mr. Stephen puts it:[3] "The sympathetic being, that is, becomes in virtue of his sympathies, a constituent part of a larger organization"; — as a reflecting body, to follow his further illustration, derives its color not only from its own structure, but also from surrounding bodies. Thus conscience in the individual is to be regarded as the reflection of the social sense of good, which his sympathetic nature, like a sensitive plate, enables him to receive. The individual conscience is reflection of the social sense of well-being.[4]

This attempted social derivation of conscience contains an important truth for our ethics. Any purely individualistic determination of conscience is in danger of stopping with a half-truth, and perverting by its incompleteness, the practical moral standards of life. There is no little truth in the terse saying of Mr. Green: "No individual can make a conscience for himself. He always needs a society to make it for him."[5] Neither morally nor spiritually, any more than physically, is the individual an atom, nor can the obligation of the individual soul be measured in any atomistic conception of it. "Only through society," as Mr. Green explains, "is personality actualized."[6] We

[1] *The Science of Ethics*, p. 349. [2] *Ibid.* p. 351. [3] *Ibid.* p. 257.

[4] To act reasonably, a social being must take that course of conduct "which gives the greatest chance of happiness to that organization of which he forms a constituent part." *Ibid.* p. 258.

[5] *Prolegomena*, p. 351. [6] *Ibid.* p. 200.

shall have occasion to observe further on, how the social conception of man's being and duty enters into the idea of the highest good.

If we sum up the contributions which we may receive from these various endeavors of recent writers to trace the natural history of conscience, they may be stated as follows: (1) A clearer recognition of the fact that man morally and spiritually is a growth, and not the result simply of some stroke of creative power. (2) In man's growth all his being has been involved, and each part and power of his nature has been developed in relation to all other parts and powers of his nature. (3) The highest and most distinctively human issues and powers of this development of man have their antecedents and conditions in less human and more animal capacities and processes. (4) Man's moral consciousness has some continuity with all man's preceding life and growth. (5) Man's moral life takes up and transforms previous non-moral elements and experiences. (6) The moral development of the individual cannot be held separate from the moral development of the race; there is a moral solidarity of the race; the individual conscience is conditioned by the social conscience. (7) With more or less distinctness and precision the history of this growth into moral consciousness from its germinal emergence out of the pre-existing soil of the non-moral may be conceived and traced; or what we have called a natural history of the rise of conscience may be written with sufficient plausibility to give it value. (8) Any further determination of the nature of conscience from psychological analysis must now be conducted under the light which may be thrown upon the formation of conscience from this natural history of it.

In view of these researches and results older theories of intuitionalism undoubtedly require modification. And it is possible that the result of such investigations into the natural genesis and the natural laws of conscience may prove in the end, not that conscience is any the less distinctive and supreme, but that nature from the beginning may have been more pervaded with tendencies towards

the moral than we had supposed. Increasing knowledge of the natural laws and growth of conscience may yield as a last word a better moral teleology of nature. For we may discover how from the beginning the creation was constituted for the evolution of moral being, and ordained for the reign of moral ideas.

We may now return to the method of psychology and inquire what are the deliverances of the moral consciousness, as we now possess it, concerning itself; and further what validity these immediate utterances of our moral nature maintain in comparison with the natural history of the growth of conscience at which we have just glanced.

It is as important to bring physiology to the bar of psychology as it is interesting to bring psychology to the investigation of physiology. The one method of examination is as necessary and as valid as the other. The fruit is a commentary on the tree, as well as the tree an account of the fruit. If on the one hand positivists would subject conscience to their evolutionary theories of its origin and growth, it is equally necessary on the other hand to re-examine such theories in whatever light conscience, when it is finally kindled and afire with truth and God, may throw back down the age-long processes of its preparation.

The testimony of moral psychology — the results of analysis of man's actual moral consciousness — may be briefly summarized (so far as is necessary for our introductory purpose) in the following particulars.

1. We find existent in known moral experience two factors, the one of which is the moral constant, the other a moral variable, or succession of variables.

The meaning which one man expresses, and the next man understands, in the use of the word ought, represents a moral constant of human experience. So far as we are able to follow through its manifold changes, or to trace back to its earliest human conditions, the ethical experience of our race, we find this moral element persistent and continuous in it. Whatever we may imagine pre-

historic conditions of man's life to have been, or whatever science may conjecture were the animal conditions antecedent to the origin of man, when once any moral consciousness has been gained, this element of obligation, this moral conviction for which language has distinct and separate words of obligation, appears and makes its presence felt and influential; and this characteristic human sense of obligation is a continuous and persistent force, the moral constant of our human history.

2. Not only has man's history been the rise and discrimination of that which is moral from all non-moral elements and forces of nature, but also these non-moral factors have been moulded and fashioned in man's life by this distinctive moral energy of his being. In other words, the natural history of conscience has been itself determined by conscience.[1]

We cannot find a place, a time, a movement, in the evolution of conscience, when some pre-existing conscience or moral tendency was not present, guiding the evolution, and determining the moral type. Man's moral being has been morally created or evolved. The moral at the end of the process proves the tendency towards, and capacity for, the moral all through the evolution, and at any remotest conceivable beginnings of it. Within the known limits of experience the moral constant, as we find it in our individual experience, has been the vitalizing and expanding energy of man's moral growth. The human conscience, in short, is itself morally formed from within, as well as naturally evoked from without. Conscience is in a sense a self-creation, having its life in itself.

A previous non-existence of any moral element or vitality in nature must be supposed, if conscience is to be regarded simply as a composite of material forces; but such primitive non-existence of the moral constant is certainly so prehistoric as to be matter only of scientific conjecture; and if we hold our thought to the strict law of causality we shall find no place for it as a conceivable

[1] Green remarks with truth that "the history which thus determines moral action has been a history *of* moral action." — *Prolegomena*, p. 110.

hypothesis. For since the moral in distinction from the non-moral is now clearly here, it must always have been, potentially or actually, somewhere and somehow.

The question is not raised just now whether this pre-existence of the moral energy was in nature or without nature — an immanence of the moral in nature, or a moral transcendence of nature; or whether indeed it is not and has not always been both immanent and transcendent. The point now taken is that the natural evolution of morals, so far as we have any positive knowledge of it, or indeed are able rationally to construe it, has itself been morally determined. Analysis of our existing moral consciousness and investigation into the past moral life of man, so far back as we can follow it with any certainty, discloses these two factors of the development and power of conscience: a succession of moral variables — elements and influences more or less moralized; — and a moral constant assimilating and organizing the variable conditions of its life. We observe certain non-moral, or partly moral feelings, acts, influences under the formative power of the distinctively moral vitality of human nature. This moral constant may indeed reveal itself in different degrees of illumination and power; — it may be as dim starlight at one hour of history, and bright as the noonday in another age; — but the moral in man is the inner reflection of "the Light which lighteth every man, coming into the world." [1]

The question concerning the origin of conscience resembles the inquiry which has been pursued concerning the origin of life on the earth. Even though spontaneous generation be regarded as hypothetically possible, nature under the minutest scrutiny has no instance of it to show. Life, so far as we have any positive science of it, always presupposes life. Throughout the known history of life there has been a vital constant unresolvable into anything other than itself, revealing itself in its distinctive organic energy, and putting forth ever fresh and increasing vitality, in the midst of the variables of species, and without break of

[1] John i. 9.

living continuity among the ceaseless transformations of forces. It has been the same with the vitality of the moral consciousness of man. We know not a solitary instance of the spontaneous generation of conscience. Other, non-moral materials may have been taken up into the organization and enrichment of the moral life of man; but the rise and growth of conscience have always proceeded in the presence of some pre-existing moral vitality; we have no positive science of the conversion of non-moral into moral being, except through the mediation of already existing moral power; spontaneous generation, in short, is as pure a fiction in morals as it is in biology.[1]

3. This moral constant may become itself an object of choice. It is the good in which the rational consciousness centres, on which the will may rest. The idea of good, or perception of worth, may be said to furnish in and from itself the desire which is satisfied in the moral choice of it. Psychologically it is not true that all objects of desire are pleasures, — that pleasure is the only thing desired or chosen. For an object or end of activity may be itself desired, and the pleasure accompanying the choice may be a sign or justification of the choice of it as reasonable, but not necessarily the object of the choice, — the thing immediately desired and willed.[2]

Outward things have many relations to our life, and in any of these relations may call forth the energies of our wills. An object may become an object of will in any relation in which it becomes an object of perception. And although it be maintained that all the manifold relations of objects to our being are accompanied in our perception of them with possible or actual sense of pleasure or pain, it does not follow that their pleasurableness or painfulness is the only aspect of them which may call forth our activity or fix our desire upon them. A perception of their fitness to our life, or their harmony with our ideas

[1] For fuller discussion of this position, see Smyth, *Religious Feeling*, ch. iii.

[2] Mr. Green has rightly insisted on this distinction between objects of desire, and the pleasures of desire, in his *Prolegomena*, pp. 165, 178.

of our ends in life, or their value as means for the accomplishment of previous choices, — a perception of any one of various relations in which they may exist for us, — may be the immediate reason why they are desired, and the determining motive of our choice. Or they may be chosen directly and solely for the promise of some specific pleasure contained in them; but these different reasons for choice, and these distinguishable states of mind in the act of willing, cannot be identified or regarded as essentially the same. In other words, all relations of objects to our judgment and our choice cannot be expressed in terms merely of pleasure or pain.

Moral satisfaction as itself an object of choice, is distinct from any other pleasure which may accompany the act of choice, or be regarded as a possible consequence of it. Moral approbation as an object of desire is an object sufficient unto itself. So far as it affords pleasure it yields a peculiar and distinctive kind of pleasure, not to be confused or confounded with any other pleasures.[1] Hence it follows that the moral constant of human experience involves a perception of the good as in itself an end to be chosen, and as such of absolute worth. From the sense of obligation there is kindled in the intellect the clear idea of moral worth.

4. The moral constant, which yields the idea of worth, affords thereby the measure, or means of volitional comparison (preference), between motives which otherwise would be incommensurable. Two things are involved in this proposition: first, that there are different kinds of motives which are not directly comparable; and secondly, that through the moral constant, with its idea of worth, they may be brought to some common measure within the unity of personal consciousness. Utilitarian morals reduces the moral motive itself to pleasure, — the greatest sum of pleasures, or the highest kind of pleasure; it

[1] Mr. Mill's admission of a difference in quality between pleasures is really a fatal admission for hedonism. — *Utilitarianism*, pp. 10 sq. For by what standard of value shall the qualities of pleasures be determined? Hedonistic ethics logically requires the reduction of all pleasures to quantitative measurements.

assumes that all pleasures can be summed up in one conception of pleasure, and that a direct measure of comparison between all desirable objects exists in our consciousness of pleasure. But this is pure assumption. On the contrary, it would appear upon a close psychological analysis not only that moral pleasure is distinct in kind, and that conscience affords a unique satisfaction; but also that there are several classes of pleasures which arrange themselves, when directly brought into line with each other, as a series of incommensurables, having no common divisor, and admitting of no further reduction. Intellectual pleasures, for instance, are not a multiple of any physical satisfactions. No bodily sensation can be used as a common divisor of the pleasures of the imagination or of intellectual acquisition. We cannot contain higher pleasures in multiplied terms of the lower, or compare directly the sweetness of a taste of sugar with the delight experienced in reading a poem. The one may become the sign for the other — words signifying bodily sensations have been transfigured into metaphors of the spirit; all spiritual life has its sensible environment and analogies. But directly the two are not on the same plane; the lines are parallel and near, but not identical. They can be brought into relation and comparison, not because they are points in the same line, but because they are parallel lines within the domain of the same thinking, willing consciousness of being. The unity of the sensible and the supersensible, of the physical sensation and the moral pleasure, does not consist in any common matter which they share; but it is given in the oneness of the personal life which proceeds on both these lines. The two are correlated in the personal unity of our life. Utilitarianism in making all pleasures directly comparable as things of the same kind, assumes a spurious commensurability of objects which differ in our consciousness of them.

Equally fallacious is it, and unsupported by close psychological analysis, to imagine a greatest sum of pleasures which may be chosen as the supreme good. For pleasures of different kinds can no more be added together in

one sum than the angles of a geometric figure and the chemical affinities of two elements can be added in one equation. Sunlight and earthiness may indeed be organically united in the vegetation which shall be the flower and fruit of both; so likewise bodily sensations and pleasures, and mental and moral light, may be organically unified in the rich personal being and life of man: but a sum of pleasures mathematically computed in an equation of the greatest possible happiness is as inconceivable as a sum of sunlight and dirt. The greatest sum of pleasures, which figures in utilitarian ethics, is a pure fiction of philosophic speech. Utilitarianism is a fictitious application of mathematics to psychology. It would put together arithmetically what nature relates and combines only through organic and vital processes. Plato said truly that God geometrizes; but the Hebrew Scripture speaks also of the living God. Nature is more than geometry; it is also life. And the processes of life are spiritual as well as arithmetical. As matter of fact, no human soul has ever succeeded in reducing its life of desire and choice to the series of equations of pleasures which utilitarian ethics invents.

If it be true even of the different kinds of sensible pleasures that they cannot be added up in any common measure, still more evident is it that moral satisfactions are incommensurable in kind with all other pleasures. The delight which the hero finds in doing his duty nobly, even at the cost of life itself, is not comparable with any satisfaction of appetite. The peace of the saints in the love of God is not to be expressed in words of physical satiety.[1]

[1] A similar effort to reduce the springs of human action to some system of quantitative measurement was made, from an opposite quarter, by Spinoza: "I shall discuss human actions and appetites just as if it were a question of lines, planes, or solids."—*Ethics*, Part iii. Int. The only difficulty with the endeavor is that human conduct is not a matter of lines, planes, and solids; and, although there is an order of freedom, of which some philosophic account may be rendered, different qualities of motives cannot be directly measured on a quantitative scale. Some third term of comparison must be found, by which to determine the variant worths of motives in the scale of preferability. Moral statistics may afford rough averages of probabilities of conduct, but occultations of virtue cannot be calculated like eclipses of astronomical bodies; there is no exact science of freedom.

If, however, all these several kinds of pleasures, including moral delights, are not directly comparable, how, it will be asked, are we to understand the fact that many preferences of actual life bring two or more of these incommensurables into comparison, and a choice is made between them? The martyr chooses moral satisfactions in preference to physical comfort. The student prefers the pleasures of prolonged study, with a moderate income, to the pursuit of wealth and luxury.

So far as a choice may be made between pleasures of the same class or kind, — between pleasures, for instance, which may have a common measure in similar bodily sensations, or between pleasures which have some common mental term, — the problem presents less difficulty. But our preferences play also constantly between different kinds as well as degrees of pleasure; and character is expressed in the predominant choice of one kind of pleasure over a different kind. What, then, is the missing relation? What the third term through which they are brought into relation and comparison?

The answer has already been indicated. It needs to be amplified only that it may not be overlooked. The common term of relation between objects of desire or choice, which are in themselves incommensurable, is the worth of these different things to the person and his ends of being. They enter into comparison as different elements of one life, and in their relative worth as means to the ends of that life. As they possess or manifest in experience distinctive worths for the growth and completion of the personal soul and its life, these things which are as different as a bodily sensation or a mental activity, as a state of slumber or a spirit in prayer, may be compared by the reason; and according to their value under different circumstances for the ends of being they may become objects of rational preference to the will. In short, motives different in kind are morally comparable. The moral constant in man's consciousness of ethical good is the common measure of motives. They may be ranged according to their degrees of preferability on a scale of worths.

This idea of worth may indeed itself be conceived in different ways; but in some way it must be used as a common measure, or relating term, for pleasures which otherwise could not be brought into any preferential order; it cannot be itself reduced to, and identified with, any one of those pleasures. It expresses some relation of motives to ends. Some idea of relation to the end of being forms the ethical measuring-rod. One pleasure is worth more to me than another, and therefore I should choose it. Why? Not because it contains more pleasure, but because it is pleasure of a greater value to me. Not because its degree of pleasure is greater, but because its kind of pleasure is higher. But why is it higher? This I can only answer by showing some common measure, which I find in man's consciousness of the worths of things to him, by which different kinds of pleasures may be compared. In other words, I can find a human commensurability of motives in some idea of worth, which idea may be described in various phrases, but which I cannot in my consciousness of it resolve into anything other or simpler than itself.

Lotze holds that the idea of worth implies always some relation; that it is a relative term (*Pract. Phil.* s. 7). It is true, as we have been arguing, that the idea of worth expresses the relation of an object to an end of being; an object has worth in relation to that end; different objects may be compared by means of their relative worths to the end of a life: the moral absolute is the supreme end, or idea of the highest good. It by no means follows, however, that the idea of worth in this moral relation of objects to ends can be identified with the feeling of pleasure. It is true that I cannot dissociate the idea of the worth of an object to me from my feeling of pleasure in it; its worth to me affects my feeling, and is signified by my sense of pleasure; but the pleasurable feeling, which expresses the worth of an object to my life, by no means exhausts, it is not identical with, my recognition of the worth of that object to me. On the contrary, the object as worthy is cause of the pleasure by which its worth is felt and recognized. The quality of the object (its worth to me) is manifested by its effect in pleasurable feeling. Absolute worth would be the cause of a feeling of absolute pleasure in the subject affected by it. To regard pleasure as identical with moral good is to mistake the sign for the thing signified. There is a special kind of pleasure (sense of moral approbation, feeling of moral satisfaction), which accompanies and signifies the attainment of moral good; different degrees of this pleasure may mark different degrees of excel-

lence in acts or objects which are of moral worth to us. The full attainment of the morally good would be blessedness. So Lotze reasons that while the worths of different things cannot be conceived independently of our relation to them, still the pleasure we find in them is at the same time "a recognition of the objective beauty, excellence, or goodness of that which occasions our pleasure." In other words, while the quality of worthiness or unworthiness in anything exists for our feelings, it exists independently of our feelings.

5. The idea of worth, (which we find to be a distinctive characteristic of rational consciousness, and which is the means of volitional preference, between things that differ in their relations to the ends of personal life,) serves still further to characterize and to define what we have called the moral constant in distinction from the moral variables of human history.

The idea of worth is a simple and ultimate idea — a moral constant of experience; but the judgment of the relative worths of things to the ends of life, is complex and changeable — a moral variable of history. Morality has involved not only a changeable perception and judgment of what may be the values of different objects to man, but also a sense of obligation to determine his life in accordance with their worths. We ought to graduate our preferences on a scale of moral worths. Conscience, or the moral constant in man, is thus seen to admit of variable contents under its permanent obligation. The materials for conscience may change, may become enriched and clarified, while the obligation of conscience remains unchangeable. This is only saying that conscience is a constant of a life which is capable of development, of a nature which admits of expansion.

6. The endeavor to explain away the moral factor of life in the supposed interest of scientific unity, fails of its philosophic intention; for it loses the unifying idea of moral worth and breaks up human life into a series of incommensurables. In the effort to escape the apparent dualism between body and mind, the flesh and the spirit, any non-moral account of the rise of man's moral being falls back into an atomistic conception of human nature, and renders the life of man and the course of history but

a heap of accidental and unrelated properties and events. We might not inaptly apply the adjective polytheistic to the psychology of hedonistic ethics; for its problem is how to reduce to any intelligible mental and moral unity its world of many gods, its innumerable pleasures and desires, and manifold fortuitous associations of widely differing objects of human regard. Much modern philosophy, in its eagerness to escape dualism, misses the real unity of the spirit and its life, and falls unawares into polygenesis in its theory of the origin of the soul, and into polytheistic ethics in its association, without any supreme principle of moral worth, of many pleasures and indiscriminate sums of things to be desired. The effort to escape this moral polytheism by reference to some order of nature, or general solidarity of human interest, resembles the escape of religion from the worship of many gods to the dominion of one fate; there ensues a dissolution of all personal motives into some vast impersonality of good.

The clear recognition, on the other hand, of the moral constant as an integral and eternal element of personality, escapes this reversion to atomism in philosophy, and remains true to the human consciousness of the moral value of our being and its ideal ends.

Whether more may not be learned from conscience concerning its origin and the signs which it brings with it of man's destiny, will appear further as in the course of our discussions we shall have occasion to hold the natural conscience up to the light of the most developed ethical consciousness of Christianity. But the assumption, which we have been justifying, of the existence and authority of the moral in man, is one of the postulates of Christian ethics.

VIII. THEOLOGICAL POSTULATES OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

The ethical beliefs and standards of Christian men, as has already been observed, are intimately associated with their conceptions of Christian doctrine. The doctrines, however, which we need to bring as postulates to Chris-

tian ethics are simple, few, and comprehensive. Having already indicated the general relation of ethics and theology, we need do little but summarize at this point certain theological postulates which will appear in the subsequent course of our inquiries.

I. We assume from apologetic theology the positions of Christian theism.

II. We assume the process of a divine self-revelation in man, through nature, and in the course of history, culminating in Christ. This postulate will be more specifically defined subsequently.

III. We assume an ethical idea of God.

This postulate is of such consequence that it should not be passed over without some further preliminary reflection. Dorner regards the ethical idea of God as the starting-point of Christian ethics.[1] One result of the study of theology from the moral side will be the gain of a more advanced and adequate ethical conception of God. We need not, however, assume at the outset the complete ethical conception of God which we may hope to win through the study of Christian ethics; but we must begin with an idea of God's nature sufficiently ethical to enable us to go on our way unhindered by our theology. And we must refuse at any point to carry over from dogmatics a conception of God or his government which is unmoral, or which might debar us from further progress in our ethical pursuit of Christian truth.

We assume in general at the outset of any Christian ethics that the divine nature is moral, and that the moral is in essence the same in God and man. We exclude as unmoral any conception of God which exalts his will above his goodness, which finds the ultimate ground of right in might, and renders moral distinctions dependent on an omnipotent arbitrariness. We should find no justification for writing another page of ethics, if we started with the assertion of Duns Scotus that right and wrong are created by the free will of God. Ethics on that supposition might be a science of what is right now, but it could not

[1] *System der Christ. Eth.* s. 48.

be a search for eternal righteousness. We assume that love is lord in the divine will, not that the will of God is sovereign over his love. God's omnipotence, as Dorner would say, exists for his love. The moral constant which we have discovered in human nature, we believe to be also a moral constant of the universe because it is the essential nature of God. If it were not independent of all will, it would not be independent of our will. If it were not God's eternal nature, it could not be our absolute human obligation. Moreover, it should here be observed that we shall not trouble our Christian morals with any dogmatic ideas of the divine government or decrees which are not ethically conceived and ethically luminous. Any dogma which theology sends to ethics must present preliminary credentials of its good moral standing in order to be received and welcomed. The sole sovereignty to be allowed in this field is moral sovereignty.

IX. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE STUDY OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS

These introductory remarks will serve also to suggest some of the difficulties to be met in an endeavor to comprehend the moral consciousness and life of Christianity. In one sense this can never be adequately accomplished in any system of Christian ethics. New books are periodically needed in this department, because the Christian consciousness is always a growth in grace and knowledge. The last book on Christian ethics will not be written before the judgment day. For the ethical life and moral judgments of each generation will continue to furnish material and light, but not rest or pause, to the Christian spirit of the succeeding age. The facts of human life change; social conditions become more complex; and problem succeeds problem in the ethical perfecting of the race. Christian ethics therefore should be a growing knowledge and prophetic understanding of the increasing life of Christ in the world. Even more than dogmatics is ethics called to be a progressive science of the Christian life until

the end. The moral constant of history — conscience and its great conviction of authority — is itself capable of intensification and illumination in the experience of men; the light in man, being always the same celestial Light, may yet shine clearer unto the perfect day — the "beam in darkness" may grow; and with the increasing years the moral variables also multiply and combine in ever new and more heterogeneous transformations. Until the Ideal becomes real, until the kingdom of heaven fully comes, Christian ethics will be called time and again to take up anew its high prophetic task of the moral understanding and interpretation of life.

This power to bring life to true moral interpretation is something more than a scientific attainment. Moral insight was always a prophetic gift. Nor can any one age, nor any single mind, however gifted or inspired, hope to discern, or to bring to full expression, the whole moral significance of human history. All moral as well as religious prophesyings are in part. So long as the supreme good remains realized only in part, it cannot be known in full. Each age opens a larger prospect, and each prophetic spirit in the chosen succession of God's interpreters stands on higher vantage ground. Isaiah in his visions beholds a land of promise fairer and more ideal than Moses saw from Pisgah's height; the Baptist prepares the way for a diviner coming of the Messiah than Isaiah and the prophets had dreamed; and the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy";[1] and in that testimony all the Christian ages are to have their part and word. The true teachers of Christian ethics are the noblest and happiest lives from every generation. All the saints in their apprehension of the love of God which passeth knowledge, are its witnesses and prophets. Its Spirit has the gift of many tongues. The languages of all peoples who shall learn to walk in the light of its truth, shall contribute to its final richness and fulness. And any humblest Christian character may bring some power or grace of it to new and fairer revelation. We are to

[1] Rev. xix. 10.

find the wealth of the materials for our study in the whole inheritance of the lives of the disciples from the days of the apostles of old to the last endeavor of Christian man or woman to follow Christ and to make the world more Christian.

This prophetic character and these interpretative requirements of our science of the Christian life, indicate also certain conditions and qualifications which are necessary for the pursuit of this study. Every science requires of its students special gifts and training, besides the general endowment of intellect which is needed for the mastery of nature by mind. Similarly the study of Christian ethics makes its special demands upon its students. It may justly ask for some personal sensitiveness to ethical conditions, and quickness to respond to moral truths. To understand Christian ethics one should be able to put himself into some mental sympathy with Christian ideas and harmony with the Christian conduct of life. For an adequate knowledge of Christian ethics there is needed a moral nature that shall lie largely open and be quickly responsive to the influence of Jesus and the enthusiasm of the Christian ideals. Ethical truth in general is truth addressed not to the intellect alone, but to the whole personality. While Christian truth may be required to justify itself to the reason, and no real faith can be irrational, it should not be forgotten that its ethical teachings appeal to the whole life and the undivided and integral personality. Christianity teaches that every man is a son of the Father in heaven, and that through his sonship, and by a life worthy of that original human sonship from God, he is to know the Father. Something then of this human sense of sonship, something of this *will* to know the Father by doing the will of God, is necessary for our understanding of truth and particularly of the highest ethical truth. God's truth speaks indeed to the reason, but while speaking it faces our whole manhood; the Christian revelation is revelation of duty and of God to our life in its length and breadth, and for our whole consciousness of personal being and worth.



PART FIRST. THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL

CHAPTER I

THE REVELATION OF THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL

THE moralist is the man with an ideal. He cannot appear among men as a moral teacher unless he brings some idea of good which he would stamp on human life. The moral lawgiver is always the man who has had some pattern shown him on the holy mount. The moral enters and lingers in our consciousness in some vision of the ideal. We perceive some better thing to be thought or done; and while, like Peter, we are thinking on the vision, the task in which the vision may find fulfilment and interpretation, will come and await us at the door.[1]

Descriptive ethics may be a narration simply of those customs and traits which have already gained moral existence on the earth; but normative ethics will bring to life at every point some idea of what shall be. This ideality of ethics is to be recognized whatever may be our theories of the nature of the morally good. For however it may be conceived, it is a good to be made real, an ideal to be realized in human life and society. The first and last business, therefore, of ethics is with its ideals. The ideal is man's moral capital; and it is to be put at interest in life. The ideal is alike the starting-point and the goal of ethics. In any moral system worthy of the name, some thought of good to be attained is started up, and is to be pursued until it is hunted down. Though the study of ethics is to be conducted as an inductive inquiry, and the contents of the moral ideal are to be scientifically determined, nevertheless morality presupposes some idea of the

[1] Acts x. 17.

good, and the whole course of ethical induction will be directed towards the determination and definition of the good which is to be willed by men and realized in society. Without initial bankruptcy of ethics and poverty of spirit in the end, moralists cannot sign over to metaphysics the first question of human concern, What is the supreme good, the *summum bonum?* What is the best for which a man is born and should live? What is the largest and richest good which all his days here a man should seek to gain? What, in short, is your ideal of life? What pattern do you bring from your mount of vision according to which human life with its many threads should be woven?[1]

Life without an ideal is unmoral. It has no ethical worth, as brute existence has no moral value in itself. Days without ideals — visionless days — are dull days. Men are mere plodders on the earth who seek no moral ends beyond the present. Some conception of supreme good — comprehensive of life as a celestial horizon — permanent and pure as the heavens above the earth — befitting the soul as its atmosphere of light — sufficient as an eternal prospect for its life, — is the moral necessity of man's being. He may exist, he does not live, who has no moral ideal.

We are distinguished from the animal creation beneath us, with which in so many relations we are closely bound, by this moral power of forming ideals. Take from us our human ideals and you rob us of the sign and assurance of our being's worth and immortality. All lower nature exists but as the servant of the Omnipotent, because it has as yet no conscious participation in the ends of God in the creation; but the children of God are no longer servants; they are called friends, because the Son knoweth what the Father doeth. The Son of man, who was the Son of God, knew the Father, and was known of him; he was the

[1] So Aristotle began his ethics by accepting the definition of the good as "that which all things aim at"; and he remarked with practical wisdom, "Has not, then, the knowledge of this end a great influence on the conduct of life? And like archers, shall we not be more likely to attain that which is right, if we have a mark?" — *Nic. Ethics*, i. 2. 2.

Christ who saw and followed the divine idea, the eternal ideal of man.

This ideality of morality, therefore, however historical or inductive may be our methods of determining its contents, we would put in the first place and keep dominant throughout the entire course of Christian ethics. Hence the first part of this treatise will be concerned with the Christian Ideal. What is the best object, according to Christianity, for which a man can live? What is the Christian conception of the highest good?

In order that we may find the right answer to this primary inquiry of Christian ethics, we shall need first to observe carefully the manner in which the Christian Ideal is given, — the historical processes through which it has been revealed; and then, secondly, its contents, so far as they are known, may be determined. We shall consider, therefore, the nature of the revelation of the Christian Ideal; we shall then proceed to more explicit description of its contents. And beyond that will lie still further inquiries concerning the methods of the increasing realization of the Christian Ideal on earth.

We begin, accordingly, with the determinative fact that the Christian Ideal has been given historically. It has not been won by a mere process of abstraction, or through some philosophic distillation of real life into moral sentiments. The Ideal has not been ideally, but historically, communicated and taught. The Christian conception of life was no new speculation of the philosophers, no dream of the wise man, no prophetic imagination even of the glory of the Highest. The Christian Ideal was given to men in an historical embodiment of its glory.[1] The Christian Ideal in its first revelation to men was not that which they had thought, or imagined, or reasoned, it was that which they had seen and heard: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also," say the eyewitnesses of the Christ.[2] Hence the Christian Ideal,

[1] "At the summit of the Christian development of thought stands no theory, but a personality creative in the moral realm." — JODL, *Geschichte d. Ethik*, Bd. i. s. 50.

[2] 1 John i. 3.

while capable of expansion in the light of the Spirit, is in its core historical. We start in Christian ethics not to walk on the clouds; we find firm footing in the historical realization of the divine idea of man in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

This historical form of the revelation of the Christian Ideal involves these particulars, which we proceed to discriminate:

I. The Ideal is given to men in the Person of Christ, who was the real example of it, and the influence of whose Spirit is a creative power of it in the lives of other men.

II. This Ideal, which was given in a personal realization of it, is presented or mediated to us through the Christian life and testimony which the Master's coming and the Divine Spirit have called forth and inspired, and which witness to it and declare it.

III. This Ideal has also been partially realized, and applied to life in many directions, during the course of the Christian history which has proceeded from its influence. And it is still further to be realized and interpreted in the progress of Christian life and thought.

As the chief of the apostles, though he had known Christ after the flesh, could say, "Yet now we know him so no more";[1] so Christianity, which has known the moral ideal in the historical Christ, knows it also henceforth, and with increasing manifestation of its grace and truth, after the Spirit. It is to be spiritually discerned and followed. The present and continual law of the apprehension of the Christian Ideal is through moral oneness with the spirit of it: "But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."[2]

I. THE IDEAL AS GIVEN IN THE HISTORIC CHRIST

For our ethical purpose we need not become embarrassed in the critical questions which may be raised concerning the New Testament writings. For the immediate perception of the moral ideal, which shines in Christ, it is not

[1] 2 Cor. v. 16. [2] Rom. viii. 9.

indispensable for us to know whether interpolations, or some unhistorical traditions, may not have passed into, and become blended with, the apostolical testimony to the Christ which the Church has received. What concerns us ethically is the character which shines directly from the gospels. We discover a clear and radiant reflection of a wonderful moral personality in the gospels.[1]

The believer may argue that the reflection of the Christ in the New Testament requires faith in the historic Jesus as its cause; that the idea of a Person so transcendent could only have proceeded from actual vision of its divine Original; — as the image of the sun in a pure lake is proof of the presence of the sun in the sky. Moreover, from our ethical apprehension of Jesus we may proceed to deduce certain conclusions concerning his person, or metaphysical being, which we must suppose as the natural basis or ground of a character so ethically unique and perfect. This Son of man, we may conclude, must have been, as no other, the Son of God; — but although our present line of moral inquiry will run very close to these more theological interpretations of the life of the Christ, we need not confuse the two, and we may pursue our ethical course without being compelled to tarry with many critical questions, or to define theologically at every point our moral apprehension of the ideal which has been given to us, clothed in flesh, and full of grace and truth, in Jesus Christ.

We start from the fact that the Christian Ideal has its source and its realized example in the Jesus of the gospel history.

This statement, however, involves two truths which need more closely to be considered: we recognize in Jesus both an original, and an originative, moral power.

[1] The remark of Strauss that "the Jesus of history, of science, is simply a problem, but a problem cannot be an object of faith, an example of life" (*Der alte und der neue Glaube*, s. 79), is not ethically true, is not true to the historical ethical idea of Jesus, and his influence in Christian experience. Whatever historical difficulties, or critical questions, may exist, the ethical example of Jesus as an object of faith was clearly and positively given in the apostolic witness to him, and it is a known and distinct Light in the Christian consciousness, to which the world is ever returning.

The moral ideal which we discover in Jesus was original in him, and it has been creative of a new morality in his name. Light, itself from God, and not derived from man, dwelt in him: "There was the true (original) light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world."[1] And this original light has been creative of a new life and a new moral world.

The latter of these two assertions will not be seriously disputed. Christianity presents a changed conception, a new type, of virtue. It is not of the same variety as the Aristotelian or the Platonic idea of virtue. The Christian character, when it was first seen among men, appeared as a new thing, as a distinct moral type. The first Christians were known as those belonging to "the way."[2] That way was unlike any other way of life which men had pursued. Whatever may be the relations of the Christian type of character to the past, or however one may seek to explain the historic conditions of its appearance, the distinctness, definiteness, uniqueness of the Christian type, must be conceded.[3]

It is, however, another question how far this confessedly new type of virtue — this new world of Christianity — requires as its sufficient cause the advent of a new moral personality, or the descent into humanity of a new moral Life and morally renewing Power.

Although the full answer to this inquiry belongs to dogmatic theology, we cannot entirely pass it by in our endeavor to reach the ethical ideal of Christianity. We proceed, therefore, next to consider this larger question, concerning the originality of the Christian Ideal, so far as we conceive it necessary to do so from the moral point of view, and for the sake of ethical firmness and clearness in our subsequent determination of the Christian conception of the highest good.

In what sense was Jesus' morality original? Obviously

[1] John i. 9.

[2] Acts ix. 2.

[3] It is so recognized in the New Testament; it is spoken of as a new birth; the Christian is the new man, the man who has been crucified, and who is dead to the world, who also is risen with Christ. John iii. 3; Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10; Gal. ii. 20; vi. 14; Col. iii. 1-4.

it did not spring up without any vital connection with the ethical-religious soil which the history of Israel had prepared for it. Nor in the moral literature of the ethnic religions is it difficult to find single threads which may be matched with ethical precepts of the gospels. Jesus as a moral teacher cannot be regarded as original in any sense which would take the truth of his teaching out of the moral conservation and continuity of history. It is the historic Christ to whom we look as the fulfilment of man's moral ideal. When we listen to many of the purer and higher notes of humanity, and then hear the immediate voice of Jesus, we do not hear One speaking as in a new tongue altogether strange and unintelligible words; rather it seems as though in all the best who were before Him we had been listening to echoes of some divine teaching, and at last we hear in His words of eternal life the one divine voice which is the original and the fulness of all the echoes of it in the centuries.

While the moral originality of Jesus' teaching cannot be regarded as a break in the ethical continuity of history, the uniqueness of his whole moral influence is not explained, the ethical life of his gospel is by no means accounted for, by anything that had gone before it. The ethics of Jesus witness to some new access of light; the Lord's moral teaching has in it the living power of an immediate revelation of truth. The evidences of this kind of moral originality, the evidences of a new moral revelation in the mind of Jesus, lie on the surface of our gospels. The proof of Jesus' moral uniqueness is to be found along two historic lines of investigation: first, the moral creative power which has gone forth from it leads back to it as its sufficient cause; secondly, the person of Jesus, as it is mirrored in the gospels, is self-revelation of his ethical uniqueness, or super-humanness.

The Jesus of these gospels was the revelation of the divine to himself. He found in his own immediate self-consciousness light from above. The Christ does not seem to find his way in reflected light, but to walk with sure, sunny self-consciousness in the immediate light of a Divine pres-

ence. He sees, he knows, he speaks, he acts, not with hesitation, not after much reasoning, not in grave doubts, but surely, instantly, with absolute clearness of vision, as One who is of the day and who knows the Father. There is a moral immediateness in the whole teaching of Jesus, to which some approximations may be found in the momentary inspirations of the prophets and seers, but which in its constancy and steady clearness of revealing power is without human precedent, and original as a personal revelation from God. We may follow and watch the Jesus of the gospels as he walked among men in the light of his own clear spirit, as he dwelt in the absolute certainties of his direct perceptions of God's truth, while the questionings of Pharisees and Sadducees, of friends and foes, flung their shadows across his path, and gathered life's sinful perplexities to confuse his wisdom. This daily life of Jesus will become to us the evidence of its own indwelling Light; we can hardly help perceiving, what John saw clearly, that "the life was the light of men." The nearer we approach through critical and historical studies to the real Jesus of history, and the more closely we succeed in bringing those moral teachers who have resembled him in any respects into broad and full comparison with the historic Christ, the more we shall find ourselves compelled to agree with those officers who had been sent to bring Jesus, and who had let him go untouched: "Never man spake like this man." [1]

The transcendent originality of Jesus stands out from the whole background of history still more strikingly when we look up from the broadening radiance of the Christian ages to the Christ from whom the new illumination of the world has proceeded. If we trace backwards the courses of beneficence, reformation, subjection of peoples to moral order, conversion of empires, and renewals of decrepit civilization through modern history, we come to him who was born King, and over whose cross was written in every language the name of King.

For our present purpose it is sufficient to maintain that

[1] John vii. 46.

Christian ethics owes its authority to a unique historical Cause, and finds the incarnation of its ideal in the person of the Lord Christ. There is given for Christian ethics to contemplate no mere speculation concerning virtue, no dream of the highest good ; it follows the teaching of the personal Life which has been the revelation of the ideal humanness, and which is the continuous inspiration of the virtue that seeks for perfectness like the perfection of the Father in heaven. Christian ethics will be consequently the unfolding and application to human life in all its spheres and relations of the divinely human Ideal which has been historically given in Christ.[1]

Canon Westcott makes a valid distinction between a historical "tendency towards," and a "tendency to produce, the central truth of Christianity" (*Gospel of the Resurrection*, p. 59).

The figure of a tangential force might be employed to illustrate the relation of the life of Jesus to history. It enters into history and becomes coincident with certain historic tendencies ; yet it enters at its own angle, and from without the circle of existing human forces. The angle of incidence of Jesus' life on humanity is plainly distinguishable. It may be measured in terms of his teachings, such as the *verilies* of his gospels, and by his mighty acts, as well as in the whole tenor of his personal influence, and his self-consciousness of his peculiar relation to the Father. The entire Messianic and redemptive consciousness and influence of Jesus indicates that his life entered into ours from above. The doctrine of the Person of Christ, which the Church has worked out in its creed, is a rational endeavor to understand this personal uniqueness and moral originality of Jesus. But to follow the moral into the theological doctrine of the nature of the Christ would be for us to go beyond our present bounds. It belongs to dogmatics to show how far the moral originality of Jesus requires for its sufficient cause a metaphysical uniqueness of Jesus, — his divine Sonship.

We may note in passing that there is nothing unscientific, or contrary to any rational idea of the continuity of nature, in the idea of new moral and spiritual force touching nature and becoming an influence in history, although it is received at some point in the course of evolution as a tangential impact. The continuity is not thereby broken, although accelerated or altered motion may result. Rather the continuity of nature, when

[1] For a fuller and more theological discussion of the divine originality of Jesus, see the author's *Old Faiths in New Light*, ch. v. For an instructive comparison between Jesus and contemporary Judaism, see Delitzsch, *Jesus and Hillel*. For a profoundly exhaustive discussion of the relations between Philo and the New Testament doctrine of the incarnate Word, Dorner's *Doctrine of the Person of Christ* should be studied, especially by those who catch at superficial resemblances to the Christian teaching in the Alexandrian wisdom and miss the deeper differences.

its course is deflected, requires for its own preservation this supposition of its reaction under new impact from the larger universe around it. The supernatural, or cosmical, divine power may manifest its entrance by temporary disturbances at its points of impact; then it becomes natural, or connatural, and works on in the unity of all the forces of life. So motion may be conceived of as force communicated to matter; so the access of life to matter ready for its impact may be regarded as the new impulse which becomes another law and produces a higher order of nature. So the life of the Christ coming from above, and signalized at first as a supernatural advent, works on and becomes naturalized in the spiritual forces of humanity. Since Christ the kingdom of God is within man. Mr. Wallace, in the concluding chapter of his volume on *Darwinism*, shows at length that new causes do not break the continuity of nature (pp. 463 sq.).

The ethical Ideal, which was immediately given in Jesus Christ, is mediated to the successive generations of men through the continuous and increasing life which is called forth and controlled by it. This ethical Christian experience, and its continuity, is realized in a twofold process: it has been conserved and transmitted through Christian testimony and tradition, in the historic continuity of the Church; and it is also vitally reproduced in the life of each Christian man. We pass next, therefore, to the consideration of both these forms in which the Christian Ideal is continued and developed, — its external mediation, and its ever new spiritual reproduction in personal experience.

II. THE HISTORIC MEDIATION OF THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL

The Christian conception of good is brought to us both in the Christian consciousness, which is the continuous and ever living work of the Spirit of Christ, and also in those written Scriptures which are received as an authoritative expression of the mind that was in Christ since they proceeded from an immediate experience of him under special promises of his Spirit.

Before we can proceed to the specific determination of the Christian virtues and duties, we must come to some clear understanding concerning the authority to which appeal may rightly and finally be made for our whole Christian conception of life. The general statement just given

concerning the historic mediation to us of the Christian Ideal requires us to enter more particularly into the relation of the Scriptures to the Christian consciousness. It will be noticed, however, that in our form of statement, we have put the Scriptures in the line and order of the whole historic working of Christ in the spiritual consciousness and life of humanity; for only in that order is their authority to be maintained and defined.

The Scriptures themselves are products of spiritual experience: the Old Testament the product of the experience of an anticipatory Messianic revelation; the New Testament the product or deposit of a distinctive experience of the Christ. Only as the Scriptures are products of the Spirit in human experience can they become norms or intelligible rules for human life. It can hardly be insisted too urgently that the inspiration of the sacred Scripture is itself put in peril, if it be held separate from the whole work of God's Spirit in humanity, if it is not comprehended as an element and factor in the whole spiritual experience which men have gained of God and the Christ. The doctrine of the Spirit in the Bible is a special part of the still larger doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the life of the world. The question concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures is an important, yet subordinate part of the whole question concerning the working of the Divine Spirit in human history, and particularly within the Christian consciousness of the Church. If the word Church be taken largely as inclusive of the common and historic consciousness of Christian humanity (and not narrowly as identical with any external form or ecclesiastical order), the remark may be repeated without hesitancy: "It is, we may perhaps say, becoming more and more difficult to believe in the Bible without believing in the Church."[1]

This question concerning the authority of the Scriptures (so far as for the purposes of Christian ethics we are called to determine it) is this: How far are certain Scriptures which issued from immediate apostolic experience

[1] *Lux Mundi*, p. 338 See below, p. 74.

of Christ, and which were the first-fruits of his Spirit, to be regarded as an authoritative rule for subsequent Christian character and conduct?

We proceed, accordingly, to inquire how historically the Christian ideal has been brought to us through certain sacred Scriptures; and, secondly, how such communication of the Christian Ideal through the Bible stands related to the present and future mediation of it through the same Spirit in the Christian consciousness of men.

§ 1. THE MEDIATION OF THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES

1. The Moral Ideal in the Old Testament.

The Old Testament marks the period of its imperfect, yet real and growing vitality and power. The morality of the Old Testament was incomplete, in many respects defective, and neither in its outward sanctions nor its inward motives a final morality for man; yet it was real morality, striving towards better things, growing from a genuine ethical root into the light and fruitfulness of the coming season of divine grace. The method of the morality of the Old Testament is educational and progressive; its whole character is preparatory and prophetic.[1] We should not fail to recognize, however, among its preparatory imperfections the good fruit which remains in the prophetic literature; we shall have occasion further on to note the political ethics of which the prophets of old might be our present-day teachers. If the ethics of the Old Dispensation had not passed into the fulfilment of the New, the Hebrew prophets and poets would still be the world's most inspiring teachers of high ethical hopes and ideals, and the moral code of Israel would be the school of righteousness, reverence, and law, to which the generations should go for the loftiest instruction.[2]

[1] The right conception of the gradualness and progressive methods of both moral and religious revelation in the Bible is no modern idea, although it has sometimes been lost sight of in post-reformation theories of the Scriptures. See *Lux Mundi* for interesting citations from the Church fathers on this point, p. 329.

[2] See the author's *Morality of the Old Testament* for fuller discussion of this subject (pp. 127 sq.).

2. The Christian Ideal in the New Testament.

These writings — the New Testament Scriptures — become ethically normative by virtue of their direct reflection of the mind of Christ, and their special receptivity of his Spirit.

The immediate light from Christ in these writings makes them the primary authorities for his Church. The ultimate reason for their selection from current Christian literature or tradition was a most legitimate because a very natural reason: these writings were seen to be the nearest and clearest reflections of Christ which the Church possessed. They came closer to Him, and had more immediately His authority than all other early Christian literature.

The spiritual supremacy of the writings which constitute the New Testament canon, was the result of the uniqueness of the position in which their writers, or the circle of believers in which they originated, stood to the Lord Jesus Christ. Eye-witnesses testified of Him. Companions of the first disciples and chosen apostles received their testimony. These sacred writings are the first-fruits of the Spirit of the risen Lord. They contain the interpretations of the life and the teaching of Jesus which were current in the apostolic circle of witnesses to him, among the men who had been chosen, trained, and fitted to witness to the truth as it was in Jesus, and to whom he had given the promise of such illumination and power of his Spirit as they should need to fulfil the work which he had committed to them, and to preach his gospel to the whole world. The normative authority of their writings (including such as may have proceeded from them through others connected with them) arises from the immediate relation of these chosen witnesses to the Christ, and from the consequent Christian quality which the Church recognizes as residing peculiarly in their writings. It is impossible that any other writings can be sacred in the same sense as are these immediate testimonies to Jesus. But their authority is theirs only as it was Christ's, and as his authority is directly reproduced in theirs. Their authority springs

from their special and unequalled relation to the source of all Christian truth. The source of infallibility of a Scripture in the last analysis can be only Christ, and the Spirit of the Christ; the degree and power of the authority of any inspired Scripture depends upon the closeness and certainty of its relation to the teaching and the Spirit of Jesus. A Scripture becomes of doubtful canonicity the more the immediate Christian source and quality of it, either by critical studies or difficulties in its contents, is thrown into doubt or obscurity.

This is only saying that there cannot be two normative authorities in religion or in morals, two rules of faith and practice; one the Christian rule, and the other a Scriptural rule; one the personal authority of Christ, and the other the authority of his witnesses; one the reign of the Christian Ideal as exemplified in the Person of Christ, and the other the letter of the Scriptures which declare that Ideal. There is but one final authority, but one regulative power of faith and practice, — Christ himself, and the Spirit of Christ.

It does not detract, therefore, from the proper authority of the New Testament as the immediate reflection and specially prepared and attested witness to Christ, when we discern in it, as we have already discovered in the Old Testament, signs of a growth in knowledge of Christ, and a progressive Christianization of thought and life by the Spirit of Christ. Such signs are naturally not so marked, such progress of doctrine not so pronounced in the New Testament, as in the Old; for a higher stage of revelation has been reached; the whole conception of life has been lifted up in Christ, and the thought of the Christian disciples moves off at once on a radiant height.

Some signs, however, of progress in doctrine, and some indications of advancement especially in the application of Christian ideas to the practical problems of life, may be discerned even within the writings of the New Testament. We may trace in the book of Acts and the Epistles signs of growth in knowledge of Christ, and also of an increasing clearness and firmness in measuring the various practical relations of human life by the new law of the Spirit.

This progress in moral as well as religious knowledge of the Christ will become obvious if we compare the chief personages who became successively, in the providential order of the New Testament history, the teachers and leaders of the primitive Church. And this general advance in appreciation and application to life of the truths of Christ, which may thus be discovered in the visions and the tasks given to the successive apostolic leaders of the Church, can be traced also if we compare carefully the earlier and later writings of the same apostles. Thus the fourth gospel and the epistles of St. John are distinctly less Judaic in their language and thought, are more simply human and universally Christian in their tone and teaching than the Apocalypse which possibly may have been written by the same apostle in his earlier Jewish Christian years.

Similarly, St. Paul's later epistles show that he has reached calmer heights, breathes a clearer and more luminous air, and beholds larger prospects of redemption, than when he began to preach to the Gentiles. He knows the Spirit of Christ more profoundly, he comprehends more fully the world-wide and even cosmical significance of the gospel, as his experience broadens, and his missionary life brings him into new relations with all men, and his apostolic course nears its assured and triumphant end.

These sacred writings, it is evident from what has just been said, are to be taken as a whole and in the moral and spiritual teaching which issues finally from them, in order that they may constitute a normative authority of faith and practice. The Christian Ideal, which was embodied in Jesus Christ, is presented to us, not by Paul alone or by John, nor by either of these writers in any single epoch of his growing apprehension of Christian truth, but by the concurrent and full and final witness of all the prophets and apostles. The Bible as a whole, and in its final ethical-religious development of truth, is to be regarded by Protestantism as the authoritative outward rule of faith and practice.

When we have recognized this process of moral development in the teaching of the Scriptures down to the very end of the New Testament canon, the question forces itself upon our attention, Has this development of Christian truth stopped at that point? Or is there any further unfolding of the moral ideal which these sacred writings have authoritatively reflected? Admitting that the growth of distinctively Christian ethics began with the apostolic teaching, why should we regard the process as closed with their moral precepts? Is there not some further principle, complementary of the authority of these Scriptures, which we are to recognize in the progressive impartation and realization on earth of the Christian ideal?

It becomes necessary for us, therefore, before we can proceed further, to define the relation of Scripture and faith. Want of insight and of clearness at this point may involve our whole system of ethical judgments in confusion. There is peril of falling on the one side into a bondage to the letter which would prevent a free and broad application of Christianity to life; and on the other hand there is danger of plunging into a hasty independence of outward authority and Scriptural guidance, in which the individual would soon become lost from the common heritage of faith and wander into lonely helplessness and confusion.

§ 2. THE MEDIATION OF THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL THROUGH THE CONTINUOUS SPIRITUAL LIFE AND PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS OF MEN

1. There is a principle of spiritual continuity in Christianity.

The power of Christ has entered as a force which remains in human life, and which is continuously productive of its natural effects in human history. The spiritual continuity of the life and influence of Jesus in the Christian world-age is an observed and persistent fact of Christianity. We must admit the existence and constant operation in our world of an organizing and vitalizing

Christian principle, whatever may be our conception of its nature or its laws.

An evidence ever before the eyes of men of this spiritual continuity of power in Christianity, has been, and still is, the organic life and consciousness of the Church. In successive forms, through all controversy and change, essentially the same though always renewed, the Church has been "the Spirit-bearing body of Christ." And the Christian consciousness, which finds expression and which persists indestructibly in the creed and worship of the Church, is the one continuous consciousness of the new humanity which was created in Christ Jesus, and which through many variations, repeated transformations, and ever new adaptations to its environment, preserves its typical Christian character, and witnesses through all the ages to that one and the self-same Spirit by which it has been quickened and in whose power it has its life. There has been no more striking fact since the world began, and none more divinely significant, than is this historic fact of the unity and continuity of the Christian type of manhood in the Spirit of the Lord.

Moreover, this historic fact of continuous and ever new Christianity is found to correspond with and to fulfil the promise of the Christ to his disciples. His gospel ended with the assurance of the Holy Spirit. His last word was a pledge of his perpetual spiritual presence and power on earth. There can be no doubt that it was Jesus' thought and intention that his life should be continued in spiritual grace and energy in the lives of his disciples, and his presence be always potential in the communion of his Church. The Christ expected to be influential and authoritative in this world, and with increasing power and dominion until he shall come again. He has been spiritually present, inspiring, organizing, reforming human lives and institutions, and making all things new. So far the promise of the Lord and the truth of history seem to match, forming one increasing pattern of divinity, and revealing one purpose in the continuous and unfolding order of Christianity.

2. The Christian consciousness is not only a continuous, but also a progressive appropriation of the Christian Ideal. In one age some appreciation and appropriation of the true idea of Christian life and society has been gained, and then there has followed a new idealization of the good which had been realized. The ideal becomes real among men only to ascend and to appear in some higher spiritual manifestation. It is as though Christian history were itself a repeated manifestation and ascension of the Son of man; — the ideal which has been realized in some historic good is still further exalted and glorified in Christian thought and devotion. The progress of faith is a manifestation, an ascension, and a coming again, ever repeated, of the Christian ideal among the disciples. The general law of Christian progress may be stated as a realization of existing Christian ideas, and then their further Christianization after the Spirit of the Lord.

To maintain, as we do, that there is possible progress in the ethics of Christianity carries with it, also, the implication that Christian theology is not to be regarded as a closed science. Without traversing the whole field into which the discussion of progress in theology might lead, it is necessary for our ethical purpose to determine in what directions progress beyond the Scriptures may be admitted in Christian thought as well as in the application of Christian truth to life. For the latter cannot be admitted without assuming the possibility of some progress in the knowledge of truth for life, or some progress, also, in theology. Hence we proceed to indicate the nature and direction of such progress, so far as is necessary in order that we may reach the premises which our further ethical discussion will require concerning the relation of the Scriptures to our progressive Christian moral consciousness.

There can be no progress of the Christian consciousness away from the fundamental facts or vital truths of Christianity. Progress in doctrine and in ethics proceeds from the initial facts and truths of Christ's life and teaching, but it will not break its continuity with them. This is

only saying that the progress throughout will be typically and essentially Christian.

Advance in any knowledge may take place in two directions; it may be either extensive or intensive; it may consist in a larger comprehension of facts, or in a clearer insight into their nature. Within the limits of the canon of Scriptures progress in both these kinds is admitted. But it is assumed by many that, since the Scriptural canon was closed, progress in theology has been permitted to the Church only in the latter kind. The only progress, it is held, which can be admitted in consistency with the integrity of a completed revelation is progress in its interpretation.

It is at least conceivable that God may have given a positive revelation of some truths, and left other truths to be brought out in the processes of Christian life after the close of the more immediate or supernatural revelation of his will. The only relevant question is, not whether in consistency with the supposed integrity of canonical Scripture such continued divine education of man can be pursued, but whether it has been pursued. Have we made progress in both kinds, by means of the increase of the Christian materials of knowledge, and through clearer Christian insight, since the New Testament days?

When the question is reduced to this decisive issue, there would seem to be but one answer to be given to it. Progress in theology has been made in two ways.

(1) New materials have been added to the science of Christian theology since the days of the apostles. For instance, with regard to the kingdom of God in the world, history has furnished us with new and enlarged materials of knowledge of which apostles were profoundly ignorant. The nineteenth century has many important facts to comprehend in its doctrine of the kingdom of God and the laws of its extension, facts beyond any possible knowledge of the first missionary apostle. And even though there had been granted to St. Paul farther and more prophetic discernment of the reaches of Christian history than his uncertain and sometimes wavering thoughts concerning

the second coming of the Lord would indicate that he had obtained, still even a high degree of prophetic vision concerning the future cannot be equal to the knowledge of definite and actual experience: a thousand years of the Lord in dim prophetic foreshadowings of them are not of so great worth to Christian science as are those years when comprehended in certain and solid history. These new facts of Christian history constitute a positive contribution to the revelation of God's purpose concerning his kingdom. Over all the prophets and apostles we have an advantage in our study of the mystery of redemption, — as an observer who has determined by new observations the distance between the earth and the sun or some near star, has a decided advantage over the astronomy which before him had only a conjectural base line for its heavenly computations. By this truer base line which Christian history has determined, we are enabled to measure with larger comprehension the work of Christ, and to understand better its universal relations. Christian history is itself an ever increasing fact of divine revelation. It is a fact of divine teaching added to the Bible. It is new teaching, although continuous with the old. Moreover, from the mastery of the laws of God which our sciences are gaining, new data are brought within the circle of Christian light both to receive Christian interpretation and to lend themselves, also, to further interpretations of Christianity. New knowledge of God's thought is thus added to his Word, and the Bible is put in a larger setting of truth.

New facts, however made known, are revelations of God in his universe. They are to be harmonized with all preceding revelations. They shed their light back upon that special divine revelation which was finished in the Christ. He Himself is the Light in which we are to discover the highest and final relations of all laws and sciences; but, on the other hand, our increasing knowledge of the universe, of the natural processes of the ascent of the creation to life and consciousness, of the growing spiritualization of matter up to the mind of man, and of the prophetic significance of the whole order of the crea-

tion beyond man's present imperfect attainment of spiritual being, — all the new facts, the larger groupings, the profounder sacredness and spiritualness, which we are finding out in nature, shed light back upon the whole Christian order of the creation, — the eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus.[1] We hold, therefore, that Christian theology, although proceeding from a special revelation, which is final and authoritative within its own limits, is nevertheless to be regarded as a progressive science because God was not through with man when the last of the apostles died, but God in history has been adding new facts and disclosing further processes of his Spirit for our Christian education. To suppose that theology is a closed system of truth, incapable of further expansion, ignores the two following considerations: First, God has reserved some of his thoughts of grace to become better known as men shall become intelligent and Christian enough to perceive them. To believe that certain essential truths have been supernaturally disclosed, does not prevent us from hoping that we may learn still more of God through further natural processes of Christain life or universal history. Secondly, God has left important and interpretative truths of his kingdom to be discovered, and to be brought to the knowledge which is given in the Bible, through the scientific acquisitions which may be gained from time to time. By such additions of new facts of history, and from such contributions of fresh materials of knowledge to Christian theology, progress is to be expected until the end of this world-age. Indeed, the last day of the world will itself be a still further revelation, a new and a final addition of history to the volume of the Word, and to the science of Christian theology.

(2) The other open way of progress in theology lies through the better appropriation and interpretation of the contents of revelation, which are given in the Scriptures. It is needless, however, to argue that this subjective way of improving our theology is ever open to us; the possibility of it is generally admitted.

[1] Eph. iii. 11.

It has been necessary for us to devote this much of our space to a vindication of the claims of Christian theology to a position among the progressive sciences, because Christian ethics in its intimate relation with theology will share in any gain or advancement of theology, and Christian ethics must claim to be also a progressive science of morals. Indeed, historically, Christian theology and ethics have advanced on parallel lines; and, when a step forward is taken by the one, the other cannot lag long behind. Any freshening of men's Christian ideas of God will be attended by a quickened sense of their Christian obligations. And more ethical conceptions of religion react powerfully upon theological systems.[1]

We have reached at this point these two results: (1) There is a continuous energy of the Christian Ideal in history. We may trace the positive continuity between the Christian Ideal which was first given through the Christ, and its present light and influence in Christianity. Having once entered into human life in Jesus Christ, it has been always with us, and is a present and living force of the Spirit of Christ in the world. (2) There has been also a progressive development of the Christian Ideal in the Christian life and consciousness. It has not been a stationary, or a dead, but a living and growing ideal of Christianity. The Christ is more and means more, for the world to-day than he has ever before been known by his own to be for mankind.

These two characteristics of continuity and progressiveness belong to Christianity both in its theology and in its ethics, both in its apprehension of God, and in its understanding of duty. The dispensation of the Spirit alike in faith and practice is a dispensation of life, and growth, and movement towards some perfect truth and good. We are now prepared to resume the question concerning the relation of the authority of the Scriptures to

[1] The epistle to Philemon might be cited as an instructive example of religious-ethical progress. The new conception of the relation of man and God in Christ — the theological truth underlying the epistle — passes at once into an ethical application to the relation of the slave and the master. The new theology of Paul was the beginning of the abolition of slavery.

our Christian consciousness, which needs to be cleared up in our ethics in order that we may find, if possible, some certain moral guidance.

III. THE RELATION OF SCRIPTURE AND FAITH

What is the relation between the continuous and progressive Christian consciousness and the inspired Scriptures? What are we to regard as the sufficient rule of faith and practice?

Obviously, as already observed, we cannot admit two independent rules, two final authorities. We cannot hold that both the Bible and the Christian consciousness are courts of final appeal. Yet we have granted that each has truth and authority. To which shall we go when pressed to choose a final ethical authority?

It is an easy answer to reply at once, and with ecclesiastical confidence, the Scriptures alone are normative, the Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and practice. But this answer, like most easy solutions of profound spiritual problems, needs to be followed but a little way before it will be seen to plunge into difficulties, and to lose itself in hopeless confusions. For (not to raise the point that the Bible has not shown itself to be a clear, decisive infallibility with regard to many doctrines or duties concerning which its most submissive readers have not been able to come to an understanding) these questions are left unanswered in this ready-made solution, — To what is the authority of the Bible addressed? From whence does it receive its credentials? Is its authority to be regarded as unlimited over conscience? Would a clear text of Scripture be enough to make right wrong? Would a plain grammatical rendering of some accredited word of an apostle warrant us in thinking evil of God? In what respects, if any, must conscience reserve to itself a final and supreme authority? Moreover, what is the relation of the Holy Ghost out of the Bible to the Holy Ghost within the Bible? Is it a relation of dependence, or of independent efficiency? of entire subordination, or of free

co-working? What is the relation of the work of the Spirit in the Church, through which the canon of Scripture was determined, to the influence of the Spirit by which the Scripture was inspired?

1. We shall take a step out of many perplexities of belief, if we are willing to start from a clear recognition of the principle of divine revelation that the Spirit works in divers ways and manners.

The same Spirit may work in the inspiration of the Scriptures, and in leading the mind of the Church into the truth. These two, therefore, the Christian Scriptures and the Christian consciousness of man, are not to be held apart, or regarded as though they were independent forces and factors of faith, one of which must be lowered in order that the other may be exalted. If we isolate the Scripture in its authority from the whole work of the Holy Spirit in history, we shall only succeed in exalting it to a perilous supremacy. We cannot take God's special word out of its general relation to our humanity without destroying its power. Whatever special or unique authority Scripture may have, it cannot have it apart from the Church to which the Holy Ghost has been given. The Scripture cannot maintain its authority in independence of the whole work of the Spirit of Christ; it cannot keep it as a living law except in vital relations to the Christian mind of an age, and all the conditions of man's growth in grace and knowledge. No doctrine of sacred Scripture can hope to maintain itself under the tests of critical studies and in the light of Christian ethics, if it fails to recognize this correlation of the work of the Spirit in the Bible with the work of the Spirit in the life and growing consciousness of the Christian Church.

2. We reject, therefore, as onesided, and perilous alike to faith in the Scriptures and to the Christian law of conduct, any view of inspiration which either puts the Bible in absolute supremacy above conscience, or, on the other hand, subordinates entirely the Scriptures to the Christian consciousness of men.

The true relation between faith and the Bible is not

to be found in a hasty answer, which subjects either one without qualification to the other. Rather we hold that the two are harmoniously related, and that we are to endeavor to understand the just province and authority of each, and the unity in which the same Spirit works through both. If it has been the active error of Romanism to exalt the infallibility of the Spirit in the voice of the Church above the infallibility of the same Spirit in the written word, it has seemed to be the passive error of Protestantism, since the Reformation, to forget too much the interdependence of the written Scripture and the living witness of the Spirit in the mind of the whole Church. Yet the two testimonies of the Spirit are complementary, and the authority of the one requires the witness of the other. If we separate these two factors of the spiritual life of man, we can have no sufficient rule, and consequently no infallibility. Furthermore, neither of these two is of itself source of authority, but only means for the impartation and reception of supreme truth. There is but one original source of authority; it is the Truth itself, — the truth which came by Christ. There is only one final and supreme authority in Christianity, either for its theology or for its ethics, — that is the Christ, the mind of Christ, the Spirit of Christ. The Holy Ghost is the final authority; the teaching of the Holy Spirit is the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

3. Hence the question of authority in religion, when reduced to its Christian simplicity, is resolved into this inquiry, — How is the one teaching of the Holy Spirit imparted? How is the teaching of the Spirit of Christ to be discerned in its doctrinal and moral infallibility?

The answer to this inquiry we may find, not when we separate Scripture and faith, but when we hold them in close correspondence and reaction.

The Scripture is law to the Christian consciousness, — *to* it, not independently of it. The Christian consciousness, — all the knowledge and experience, that is, which Christianity has gained of its Christ, — becomes also in its turn law to the Scriptures; — law of their interpretation,

of their criticism, of their verification, of the selection and completion of their canon. The Scripture is the outward, fixed, formal norm or authority to faith; faith is the verification, the Christian criticism and interpretation of the Scripture. The Scripture finds both reasons for, and limitations of, its authority in the knowledge and experience which man has of Christ, and the Spirit of Christ. A Scripture which should plainly and palpably deny the Christ in the best, most developed, and purest understanding of him, would thereby be judged to be unworthy of a place in a canonical Bible. The early Church would not have admitted into the canon any writing, though it had claimed to bear the signature of an apostle, if it had been found to contain an evident contradiction of the whole conception of the Christ which the Church had gained from all its Scriptures, and through the continuous witness of the Spirit in the life of believers from the beginning. In other words, a Scripture must be Christian in order to be accepted as canonical. The two answer each to the other, the word and the Spirit, the Christ and the faith of his Church. Faith is as essential to the searching and testing of Scripture, as the Scripture is necessary to the guidance and support of faith.

4. In this view of the relation of faith and Scripture, we are not setting a human authority over against a divine, or subjecting an inspired word to an uninspired judgment. Rather, we are setting things spiritual in their mutual relations.

This view approaches more nearly the original Protestant conception of the Bible, as Martin Luther apprehended the word of God through his great spiritual experience of justification. Post-reformation doctrines of the inerrant inspiration and unconditioned authority of the Scriptures have not only led the Church into manifold critical perplexities, but they have departed from the instinctive and wholesome apprehension of the word of God which characterized the original Protestant faith in the Bible. Faith in its ever fresh and living oneness with Christ is the material principle of the reformation, while

the Scripture is the formal principle of it. Neither should be separated from the other. Each of these principles is related to and dependent on the other; faith finds its objective rule in the inspired Scripture, and the Scripture finds its inward verification in faith. Each is independent in its own sphere and within its own limits; but neither is made perfect except through the other. The sole and ultimate Christian authority is the Holy Spirit whom Christ has sent. The special and chosen outward means of the communication of the mind that was in Jesus is the testimony of the apostolic Scriptures; the necessary inward judge of what is Christian, — that is, of what is the teaching of the Spirit, — is the common Christian consciousness, or the continuous and ever-renewed testimony of the Church.[1]

5. This original Protestant conception of the mutual dependence of the Scripture and faith is in general accordance with the ideas of the relation of the Bible and tradition which may be gathered from the early fathers. They recognized the work of the Spirit in the inspiration of the apostles, and also his guiding presence in the continuous life of Christ's Church. We do not find in the early Christian literature that arbitrary and mechanical separation of the two spheres of the Spirit's operation, the canon and the Church, which has been emphasized in later Protestantism. And the recovery of this doctrine of the sole authority of the Spirit of Christ in its divers ways and manners of manifestation, and according to its differing degrees of inspiration, illumination, or impartation of spiritual discernment, may be regarded as one of the distinct gains of modern theology. Deliverance from an uncriti-

[1] For a thorough discussion of the original Protestant view of the relation of faith and Scripture see Dorner's *Geschichte der prot. Theologie*, ss. 212–251. Modern Biblical criticism is happily compelling us to return from the untenable post-reformation theories to the original Protestant standing-ground. Dorner's exposition of this subject is worth careful study on the part of all who would engage in present discussions concerning the authority of the Bible. Dr. Martineau, in his *Seat of Authority in Religion*, fails to grasp this earlier Protestant co-ordination of Scripture and faith. His subjectivism is to be met by a better synthesis of the outward and the inward factors of Christian certainty.

cal, and even superstitious veneration for the letter of Scripture, and a larger faith in the Holy Spirit in the Church and in the Christian renewals of the thoughts of men, as well as belief in the special work of the Spirit in the inspiration of the sacred Scriptures, are essential alike to the maintenance of the normative authority of the Bible and to the preservation of Christian life. Should Christian ethics be held to post-reformation doctrines of the inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures, it would prove a difficult task, through such literal subjection to the Scripture, to bring the moral problems of modern society under the law of the Spirit of Christ. Christian ethics must apply truth to life in the freedom of the Spirit, yet in honest and loyal dependence on the apostolic testimony to the teachings of Christ.

IV. SIGNIFICANCE FOR CHRISTIAN ETHICS OF THE PROGRESSIVE MANIFESTATION OF THE MORAL IDEAL

The conception which we have gained of the continuous and progressive unfolding of the Christian Ideal in human consciousness, puts ethics into right relation to history.

1. We are enabled by means of this conception to distinguish better between a false and the true conservatism. Since the ideal is still in the process of revelation, and will continue to manifest itself in larger and higher realizations of good until the end of this world-age, it is folly to wish to bring back the moral standards or conditions of any past age. History has increasing worth as a continuous work of the Spirit. The stream may not rise above the fountain; but it would be absurd to suppose that the river a hundred miles down its course could be poured back into the brooks from which it has flowed. Equally foolish would it be to think of putting present and increasingly complex social conditions back into some primitive simplicity. To restore an early form of Christianity would not be to make progress in the realization of the Christian Ideal. Reversion is not conservatism. A

Christian ethic for the variegated conditions of modern society could not be reduced to the *Pædagogus* of Clement of Alexandria, or the *Summa* of the great mediæval doctor. As apostolic Christianity could not be compressed into Judaism, or kept to the one type of the first Jewish-Christian worship in the temple; as the apostle to the Gentiles reached a broader application of the gospel to the world than St. James had found necessary for the disciples in Jerusalem; so Christian manners and morals in our age cannot be reduced to the pattern of former days, or measured by the rules of any earlier social conditions. The dream of restoring primitive Christianity either in faith or morals is impracticable not merely because our theories of life have changed, but also, as Mr. Green has observed,[1] because the facts of life have changed. New social conditions confront our Christianity. New industrial problems are forced upon our ethics. The extensively ramified and fruitful tree of modern life cannot by any social magic be reduced to its primitive root, or be caused to revert suddenly into its earlier and simpler shoots. We shall have occasion all the way through our practical ethics to notice and to avoid that false and impracticable conservatism which would restore antecedent forms rather than develop richer life.

Two illustrations may suffice at this point to indicate the insufficiency of this method of moral restoration. Some years since a book[2] was written in England to show that a person who should take the precepts of the gospels literally and seek to apply them with conscientious exactness to present conditions of life, would fall successively under the condemnation of all the parties and powers of modern thought and society, and finally be rejected even by the people for whom he would live and must die. Without denying the clever satire which such a picture of an imagined literal Christian life presented, we do not hesitate to say that a character so conceived must fail because it ought to fail; that its idea of Christianity is a misapprehension of the progressive revelation of the Christian Ideal;

[1] *Prolegomena*, p. 278.

[2] Joshua Davidson.

and that consequently in its moral endeavor it falls to the ground because of the error which it carries in it. For in consistency with the truth of the continuous work and teaching of the Holy Spirit we may not suppose that the Son of man himself would live to-day in England or in the United States, or in Japan, precisely as he dwelt of old in Judea and Galilee. We must believe rather that he who knew what is in man would form his life in constant spiritual adaptation to the conditions and the tasks of any age or people; that while in his love and truth the Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, he would fit his manner of life and apply his doctrine to the social, moral, and religious requirements of every age with as much wisdom as he displayed while he walked among the people in Judea of old, or answered the questions of the scribes and Pharisees of his day. The Christ comes always to fulfil not to destroy; and Christian faith and ethics are the fulfilments of spiritual processes of life. We have a more difficult task to perform than simply to strive to repeat the beliefs or the manners even of primitive Christianity; the harder, more manifold and only Christian task is to organize present life in all its spheres of industry and thought in the spirit of the Christ. That task can be accomplished by no restoration of the Jerusalem that was, but by the coming of the Jerusalem which is above.[1]

The other illustration of false conservatism is to be found in the thought of securing the unity of the Church through reversal to the ecclesiastical type of the first centuries. Although we admit that much Church history since the earlier ecumenical councils has been a departure from the simplicity of Christ rather than a true development of Christianity, nevertheless it contradicts the law of the continuous, progressive revelation of the Christian

[1] In this sense the striking remark of Schultz, is to be understood: "Jesus can be our model only for the disposition in which we have to carry through our calling with its limitations and sacrifices. He is not model and example, but original and ideal of the Christian morality. Not to copy after him, but to let his life take form in us, to receive his Spirit, and to make it effective, is the moral task of the Christian." — *Grundriss der Evang. Ethik*, s. 5.

ideal, to suppose for a moment that the future good can be found in any past. The unity of the Church cannot be reached through Christian reversion to some earlier type; it is to be gained, if at all, as the result of further spiritual growth; it is to be won as another victory of the Spirit. That such unity may yet prove possible, and that we should dream of it and long for it, we would not question: but the way to the kingdom lies before us, and its promise is to be greeted by faith;[1] it is not to be obtained by looking and longing for a vanishing past. Such future unity will be truly conservative of all the fruits of the Spirit which have been ripening on the separate branches of Christ's true vine. It will be, when it comes, a unity of Christian comprehension and fulfilment.

The truly conservative mind will go back into the past and sight, as it were, over its chief events, along its great epochs, in order that it may mark the line of historic progress, which runs on into the future. The worth in this respect of the past, and especially of the world's Christian ages past, consists in their prophetic significance. We discover from history the direction in which the Spirit, who ever goes before the Church, has been moving, and on what lines we are to expect to be led forward. Take any one of our advanced moral ideas, as the idea of toleration, or liberty, or social obligation, or human brotherhood, and trace through the past the historic course of that moral idea, and thereby we shall be enabled to estimate more intelligently the worth of it in relation to other truths and factors, and also to apply it more confidently to present movements, and to predict the further course of its empire among men. True conservatism, in short, is progress which takes direction from the past and fulfils its good; false conservatism is a narrowing and hopeless reversion to the past, which is a betrayal of the promise of the future.[2]

2. This principle of the continuity and progress of the

[1] Heb. xi. 13.

[2] The ethical law of progress, both in relation to the past and the future, is given in the third chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians.

realization of the highest good, or Christian Ideal, gives value to our hope.

"The idea of development," as Mr. Mackenzie has well said,[1] "has made it scientific to hope, by exhibiting life not as a mere process of perpetual change, but as a growth towards a definite goal." The ethical motive of hope has secure root in this law of progress through Christian history towards a divinely intended goal. Christianity is preëminently the expectant religion. The Church could not be the church militant were it not the church expectant. Christian ethics is the hopeful science. It is optimistic not because it fails to see the evil of the present world, or to fathom the sinfulness of sin, but because it is idealistic; and even this world-history of sin, since it is also a history of redemption, follows a course of Christian idealization, which shall be continuous and progressive until the kingdom of heaven shall come.[2]

3. We may observe the contrast at this point between Herbert Spencer's outlook from the conclusions of evolutionary science, and the prospect which is opened by the prophecy of Christianity. His ethics, because evolutionary, cannot avoid a tone of ultimate optimism. One who believes in the evolution of the creation can hardly help holding to its growing good, and hoping for its ultimate best. Nevertheless a dark prospect of universal equilibrium, which is equivalent to universal death, stares our evolutionist in the face. "Alternate eras of Evolution and Dissolution" are suggested by the argument. Herbert Spencer, however, in reply to the seeming inference of the ultimate reign of "Universal Death" from his evolutionary premises, deems it "legitimate to point out how, on carrying the argument still further, we are led to infer a subsequent Universal Life."[3]

But the principle of spiritual continuity and development, which, as we have seen, lies at the basis of Christian

[1] *Introduction to Social Philosophy*, p. 124.

[2] Notice in this connection the ethical idealism of St. John's epistles. He regards life and death not merely in their present confusions, but in their clear, worked-out results.

[3] *First Principles*, p. 483.

ethics, and which runs all through the Christian interpretation of history, forbids the thought of such aimless alternation of life and death. For spiritual gains are permanent gains; what is acquired by the Spirit is acquired in eternity. It belongs to an order of being which is not held in subjection to physical change. Sin may break into this spiritual order and drag it down to the plain of mortality and corruption; but except through the moral death of sin there is no natural return of Spirit to chaos and primeval night. There is no reversion of the spiritual order through its own processes to the natural order. Life born of the Spirit is life born into the eternal. Spiritual life is by its own nature persistent force, in itself undecaying and independent of the outward processes of corruption. Such, at least, is the immortal assurance, which the true, the eternal kind of life, so far as we have any present experience of it, seems to contain within itself, and to assert with all the positiveness of self-conscious worth and love against the appearance of death and our subjection to it. Spiritual life and love are to themselves immortal. The more thoroughly spiritualized one's life becomes, the stronger grows the inward conviction of immortality. No outward proof, nor visible miracle, can make a soul sure of itself, and of its deathless worth, if it is not sure within itself of its spiritual being. If pressed for the proof of this prospect of ethical and spiritual immortality, of the final reign of true life over all death, we may find much in the analogies of nature to help us, and a historic foundation also for faith is given in the supernal life and glorious resurrection of Jesus; but the ultimate resort of the argument, and the first and last word of our faith in immortality will be found in the spiritual life of man; — this great faith will have power with us in proportion to our personal sense of the spiritual worth of our self-conscious life, and our super-temporal and super-sensible being. Indeed the outward historic evidences of the Christian revelation, the witness to the supernatural life of Christ, and his power over death in his resurrection, need to be read, not merely in the light of historical criticism, but

also in the light of their ethical contents and revelation, in order that they may be estimated at their true value, and understood in their higher naturalness — their harmony, that is, with the whole nature of the universe and its spiritual laws.

From this ethical-spiritual point of view, and in affirmation of the principle of the spiritual continuity and progressive realization of the supreme moral good in the spiritual world, we gain prophetic outlook towards a land of promise in which there shall be no more death, and the living God shall be all and in all.

CHAPTER II

THE CONTENTS OF THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL

Having thus surveyed the processes through which the Christian Ideal is communicated and known, we turn next to a determination of the contents of the supreme good, so far as it has yet been realized or exists in any possible prophetic anticipation of it before the eye of Christian faith.[1]

The contents of the Christian Ideal are in general the good which it is Christian to desire as the supreme end of life. Every moral act implies a reference of conduct to some end to be desired or gained. Every moral state, in distinction from a condition which has no moral character, implies that something has been chosen as a good or end of being. The first and perpetual question of moral philosophy is: What is this supreme good? How is this moral end to be determined and defined? One's idea of the good, whatever it may be, will be the morally dominating idea of his life.

The end of human existence has been regarded by many moralists as pleasure; and the pleasure which is to be desired as the supreme end of life has been further rarefied, purified, and exalted, until a very moral kind of pleasure has been obtained from the distillation of utilitarian ethics, — a pleasure which becomes palatable and stimulating to a healthful moral taste. The end of existence is pleasure, yet, it is added, not separate and isolated pleasure. The moral object of life is amplified and exalted into the greatest good for the greatest number, or

[1] While Mr. Green, *Prolegomena*, p. 204, rightly insists that the unconditional good cannot be defined because we cannot know our capabilities until they are realized, yet so far as the good has been realized, it is known, and partial knowledge is true knowledge.

the largest attainable or conceivable human pleasure. When the idea of pleasure is thus socialized and humanized, happiness as an ethical good assumes at once nobler proportions. The moral is identified with the useful, but the standard of usefulness is not to be narrowly conceived, or limited to individual calculation, or to private happiness; it is to be elevated into a standard of universal welfare, and this general human utility is to be measured and determined not by the short rule of any individual life, but by the prolonged experience of mankind.

When the methods of evolutionary science are employed by utilitarian moral science, it becomes possible to give a still ampler and more plausible form to the empirical determination of the idea of the *summum bonum*, or the happiness which is morally desirable. The good for any form of life is the realization of its type in adaptation to its environment. Increasing good for being as a whole consists in the development of the inner organic forces, their increasing specialization, in harmony with the outward conditions or environment of life. In other words, life, as it advances on the earth, becomes richer in specialized forms, and better adaptations to its environment. The sum of these specialized adaptations is at any time the index of the amount of good which living being has attained. Man is the highest animal, the most richly specialized organic form of being on earth, having in himself manifold and wonderful powers of self-adaptation to the world without him; his good is to be realized, in conformity to his type, through the acquisition of the fullest and most harmonious life which is possible to a being so highly organized. There may be other worlds, it will be granted, where still higher organization and greater consequent good may be possible than our positive science of man can conceive; but such future possible development and still more spiritualized powers of being, though they may be matters of faith or dreams of hope, do not yet enter, it is said, into any experience which we have of known utilities, and must be excluded therefore from any scientific formula for man's highest good.

Empirical (in distinction from transcendental) ethics, by the enrichment of utilitarianism through evolutionary methods, is thus enabled to escape from the narrow limitations of mere hedonism, or the simple ethics of pleasure, and to define the *summum bonum*, with moral largeness of view, as the development of the whole life of humanity in harmony with its environment; as the greatest possible social efficiency; or as the realization of the powers and capacities of the type or idea of the human organism. In all such utilitarian determinations of the good we must recognize a relative truth. It is an ethical gain which we owe to the naturalistic ethics of our day that we are able to trace farther, and to see much more clearly, the coincidence between the right and the useful in the moral world. But coincidence is not necessarily identity; and the fact that honesty is good policy does not prove that good policy is honesty. As the laws of beauty and the laws of utility are found to have many interesting correspondences in natural history; as a seeming principle of economy in nature uses for the protection of birds and the increase of the flowers the same processes of selection and adaptation which secure also the adornment of their plumage and the variegation of their hues; so one and the same principle in moral history may issue in results which are at the same time useful and morally pleasing, and produce from the same spiritual process both the utilities and the excellencies of the moral world. Certainly the good proves to be in the end, on the large scale, the humanly useful. Transcendental ethics, the ethics of the higher law, does not escape the necessity of proving and filling out its abstract conceptions of moral good by means of the science of moral utilities. The useful is a measuring rod for the ethical. Indeed we cannot understand the religious ethics of the Old Testament, if we do not allow room and need for utilitarian measures in the providential moral ordering of the world. The God of the Old Testament proceeded often as a utilitarian teacher of morals in Israel. That which in different ages was morally possible, which was morally adapted to further progress, was permitted in

the law and made known to the prophets. What heavenly light can shine down between the clouds or through them, is suffered to fall upon the earth; and the moral world of old was not left in utter darkness because the whole transcendentalism of heaven could not in the early ages be poured into the bright noon of Christianity. The principle of moral adaptation, or accommodation in revelation, is utilitarianism in the divine ethics; and we cannot refuse to admit this principle of relative right in Christian ethics without rejecting some of the evident indications of the patience of the God of Israel in the moral education of the race.

Moreover, evolutionary, utilitarian conceptions of the morally good approach very closely at one point to the highest transcendental idea of the supreme good. For scientific ethics finds life itself to be a good; it is desirable to be born. Any being, according to the possibilities of its type, is well-being; and for man especially life according to the capacities of a man is good, is moral well-being. That is moral which tends at any time to preserve the life of man in its largest capacity and efficiency. This last teaching of evolutionary ethics draws very near that idea of his kingdom on earth which Christ declared when he said, "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly."[1]

We have already indicated[2] reasons for our dissent from the utilitarian analysis of conscience, and its reduction of the moral worth of life to terms of pleasure. All such accounts of man's moral being and growth, we hold, either unconsciously assume at the beginning, or dexterously suffer to slip in somewhere into the process from which conscience emerges, the distinctive moral elements which we find differentiated from all others at the end of the evolution.[3] We recognize throughout the ethical evo-

[1] John x. 10. [2] pp. 33–43.

[3] Herbert Spencer, *Data of Ethics*, p. 46., asserts that "no school can avoid taking for the ultimate moral aim a desirable state of feeling, called by whatever name, — gratification, enjoyment, happiness." He says also, that pleasure "is as much a necessary form of moral intuition as space is a necessary form of intellectual intuition." We may admit the latter statement, and

lution a transcendental fact — a potency and promise in man which is moral, spiritual, of God; and this unfolding life and consciousness issues in a sense of righteousness, and the obligation of our being to the right, which cannot be resolved into anything other than itself, and which justifies itself in its effects of harmonious happy life.

We welcome the contributions of modern naturalistic ethics, so far as they serve to mark definite standards of duty and to enrich with specialized determinations of good the contents of our distinctive and inalienable idea of right. But we have assumed from philosophic ethics as a fundamental postulate the truth that there is something which man may know and obey as of absolute moral worth; that there is a supreme good which is not pleasure, although its realization is pleasurable; which cannot be reduced to a catalogue of calculations of utilities, although it also serves a principle of utility; and that this moral worth in its commanding authority, and its determined contents of righteousness, constitutes the end or supreme good of man's being.

The idea of the highest good has been the crucial test of philosophic ethics. It may be helpful to the student to append a condensed statement of the different definitions which have been given of it by German philosophers, with references to the pages in Jodl's *Ethik*, vol. ii., which I have used in tabulating these philosophic ideas of the good, and where they will be found carefully discussed.

Kant. — The proper object of the moral estimation of worth is the good will; good in itself not through what it works or effects, not through its usefulness or attainment of any end which is put before it, but good only through the willing, *i.e.* in itself good. The good will is determined only by the idea of the moral law and pure reverence for it (p. 14).

Schiller. — The beautiful soul — the beautiful morality. Reason and sensibility, duty and inclination coincide (p. 52).

Fichte. — The last aim of the individual is perfect reconciliation with himself and perfect freedom from all inclinations which do not lie in the tendency of a reasonable self-lawgiving. This is likewise the goal of society, the completed reign of reason (p. 75). The end is not happiness, but the absolute self-contentment of the reason, the entire freedom from

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apply it against the reduction of the moral intuition to pleasure. Pleasure may be the *form*, but it is not the substance of the moral intuition. We charge that utilitarianism makes unwittingly this mistake of confusing ethical form with ethical substance. It confuses the formal and material principles of the moral judgment.

all dependence, which is the essence of the moral (p. 83). The end to be attained is no enjoyment, but the affirmation of the worth which belongs to the reason (p. 86).

Krause. — The good is the essence (Wesentliche) of life to be formed in time, the peculiar, self-living determination of a being. Knowledge of this good is not possible without knowledge of the being of God in which all finite beings are contained. Ethics is a subordinate part of the general science of being — the science of God. Goodness is to do what is essential to life. God is the one good, the highest good, the original idea of the end which the moral man in a finite way imitates in himself (p. 94).

Hegel. — The realization of will as free intelligence (p. 108). The reconciliation of God with himself and with nature (p. 153).

Schelling. — The removal of the dualism between being and thinking, nature and spirit (p. 145).

Schleiermacher. — The naturalizing of reason and the rationalizing of nature. The mutual fashioning (*Ineinanderbildens*) of nature and reason. The highest good is the organic connection or summation of all goods; consequently the whole moral being is to be brought under the conception of the highest good (p. 173).

Herbart. — Good and evil are not conceptions of knowledge, but of the estimation of worth; not predicates of existence, so far as it is, but of the manner in which a possible or real object will be apprehended by a spectator standing opposite it (p. 199).

We have claimed above that we must recognize this rational element, which all these definitions grasp after, as an original, simple element of the good; but the transcendental ethical element is to be filled with contents, the good to be differentiated into the goods of life, through experimental ethics, or the wisdom of the moral utilities.

The task next awaiting us is to bring this general conception of the supreme good to further interpretation in the light of the Christian revelation. We have further to define what the chief end of life is, and to describe the realizable contents of the moral ideal, in the light of the revelation of God, who is the Good, which is given us through Jesus Christ. Christian ethics, in a word, has before it the task of Christianizing the idea of the *summum bonum*, the supreme good.

I. THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF THE HIGHEST GOOD

§ 1. THE OLD TESTAMENT CONCEPTION OF THE SUPREME GOOD

It is marked by its social rather than individualistic character. The individual Hebrew has no conception of salvation apart from the blessing of the people of Israel.

The psalmist prefers Jerusalem above his chief joy.[1] This social conception of well-being among the Hebrews appears in the early prominence which was given in the Old Testament to God's promise to the family, and the hope of a family name and inheritance forever. The family life and its blessing came first in the divine order of salvation.[2] Moreover, the family hope and blessing are to be realized in the covenant of God with Israel and the consequent prosperity of the nation. The original promise to Abraham was the promise of a blessing through his seed to all the nations of the earth; not to individuals, but to the peoples of the earth. The conception arises, and takes permanent form, of a holy people. A people chosen of God is to enter in and possess the land of promise. Individuals are not to seize the promise with solitary hands, and to keep it as their private possession; but the people of God, keeping His covenant and walking before Him in truth, are to inherit the blessing which the Lord their God shall give them. The supreme good in Israel is to be a national good.

So when the prophets with their more ethical conception of religion, begin to think of God as a father, they regard Israel collectively as His son; the divine Fatherhood, so far as it is conceived of in the prophetic literature, is His fatherhood over Israel.[3] In a twofold sense Israel is called God's son; God is his creator, and the Lord has made Israel the special object of His choice and care. So David the king, as representing the nation, is called a son of God.[4] The remnant at least of the people is destined to perpetuate the true Israel as the object of God's choice. In the religious service of the temple, and in the hope of the blessing of the covenant, the individual Israelite is never separated from the organic whole of Israel; the welfare of the just will be his participation in the prosperity of the people of the Lord. The good which all the children of the promise are to pray for, and

[1] Ps. cxxxvii. 6.

[2] *Morality of the Old Testament*, Smyth, p. 42.

[3] Ex. iv. 22, 23; Deut. xxxii. 6, 18; Is. lxiii. 16; Hosea xi. 1.

[4] Ps. lxxxix. 26–27; 2 Sam. vii. 14.

to desire above their chief joy, is the restoration of Jerusalem and the return of the ransomed of the Lord with singing to Zion.

This social conception of the supreme good marks the whole prophetic doctrine of election. It is not the solitary individual soul, but Israel who is the elect servant of God. "Yet now hear, O Jacob, my servant; and Israel whom I have chosen."[1] The grand idea of a people elected for the service of God inspired the prophets of old. Election is national rather than individual; for service rather than for happiness. The law of service for social good, and ultimately for the blessing of all nations, is the principle of the divine election according to the Old Testament prophets. This is certainly a larger and nobler conception of election than the intensely individualistic conception of it with which our Protestant theology has made us familiar. No man, according to the Old Testament doctrine of election, is chosen privately and personally for the sake of his own enjoyment, but as a member of a holy society and as a citizen in the great commonwealth of Israel; and as the consequence of election for service and royal anointing for the work of the Lord, the elect servant shall see the Messianic glory and final triumph of the kingdom of God. If in the later Isaiah the conception of the divine Servant assumes a more personal Messianic form, still the divine election of the one is for the sake of the many — the chosen Servant represents the people: "with his stripes we are healed"; "by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many."[2]

This social conception of the chief good not only pervaded the prophetic hope of the Messianic kingdom, but it moulded also and colored the manners and morals, the laws and the worship of Israel. We cannot find the true point of view from which to judge much of the morality of the Old Testament, or to understand many features of the Mosaic legislation and the priestly code, unless we constantly recur to this socialistic character of the hope of Israel, and remember how foreign our accentuated indi-

[1] Is. xliv. 1.

[2] Is. liii. 5, 11.

vidualism is to the entire conception of life and its blessing in which the Hebrew thought moved. The faith of the Hebrews was national; their prayers were national; their religious days were consecrated in the memory of national deliverances; their festivals were rejoicings in the harvests which filled the whole land with plenty. Their sin-offerings were in atonement for the transgression of the people; their whole ritual and worship moved on the broad lines of public obligation and the covenant of the people with the Lord. There are recorded in the Old Testament instances of solitary wrestling with God for the blessing, and also penitential psalms occur of apparently most personal confession of sin; but even these are experiences of patriarch or king who represent the national dependence on God, or who confess as their own guilt the sin of the people. Even the more personal expressions of the sense of injured righteousness in the psalms, and the cries of individual souls for divine deliverance, do not cease to have a certain representative tone; they transcend the bounds of personal indignation; the voice of national justice speaks in them; they can at times be morally understood only as expressions of the spirit of a people in the great crises of its warfare.

The virtues, as well as the faults of Israel, are to be estimated in this social conception of good. Abraham's faith was a social trust. He went forth seeking not simply his own ease or personal prosperity, but he looked for a better country; he sought for a city whose builder and maker is God. The first pilgrim followed in faith God's promise of blessing for the nations. And the morality of the Old Testament kept in the front rank those virtues which were necessary to secure some family permanence and social stability. It is marked by the limitations and defects of a moral system which is intent upon this first task of securing a social basis for human progress, and in which the sphere and rights of the individual have not come to clear definition. Heroic surgery of foreign elements (Amalekites and idolatries) which might cause the disintegration of the national body, if suf-

fered to grow within it, became consequently one of the early providential social necessities in the history of Israel.

It should be remarked further that the idea of the highest good which is to be derived from the prophetic literature of the Old Testament is the summation, in the kingdom of God, of all those material goods — such as plentiful harvests, springs of water, increase of cattle, a vine and fig tree for every man, peace and prosperity within all the borders of a land flowing with milk and honey, — which make a people contented and prosperous. The ideal Messianic good of the Hebrews was the fulness of all earthly goods.

The prosperity of Zion, however, is to be gained through obedience to the law of God. The prophetic conception of Messianic good, although often depicted in images of earthly fruitfulness and worldly splendor, was saved from materialism by a thoroughly ethical insistence upon righteousness as the condition of permanent prosperity for the chosen people. Although it was not yet a refined spiritualized conception of the future life of man in a realm of unearthly perfection, still a pure religious light was thrown into its worldliness; the splendor of the new Jerusalem, which the prophets foresaw, was the abiding presence in it of the glory of the Holy One of Israel. In the last days there was to be a moral religious reunion of the purified nation with its king, and a personal reign of the God of righteousness of Zion.[1]

From this brief survey of the Old Testament doctrine of the highest good we gain this general result: it is primarily social welfare to be realized in righteousness in the reign of the Holy One of Israel. Any ideal, therefore, which is chiefly individualistic, which does not contain as essential to its content the conception of the welfare of human society, falls short of the ancient Hebrew ideal, and is less than the pattern that was shown Moses on the holy mount. No individual of us is to be made ultimately happy, no single solitary soul can win life's largest bless-

[1] "The conception of a society organized on the basis of ethical religion was peculiar to Jewish thought." — Toy, *Judaism and Christianity*, p. 338.

ing, apart from his brethren, except through his membership in the human race, and his participation in the final redemption of the world for which Christ died. This moral ideal of the possible perfection of the individual only in and through the final consummation of the kingdom of redemption, is significantly implied in a verse in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which the original Hebrew conception of social salvation underlies the Christian hope of the perfect life: "That apart from us they should not be made perfect"[1]

§ 2. THE NEW TESTAMENT DOCTRINE OF THE HIGHEST GOOD

In the gospels we have the direct reflection of the moral ideal which was revealed through Jesus Christ. In the epistles we find that ideal as it was taken up in the lives of his disciples, and applied in many directions to the conditions of the first Christians in the world. But in order that we may apprehend Jesus' teaching concerning man's chief good in its distinctive purity and originality, we should seek to behold it against the background of the contemporary Judaism, across which it shone as a revelation from God. We should not only trace the connection between Jesus' moral teaching and the more spiritual words of the prophets, but also we should note, if possible, the points of contact and of contrast between the teachings which Jesus gave to his disciples and the common opinions taught in the school of the synagogue.

In the Messianic ideal, which was cherished by the Judaism contemporary with the time of Christ, amid some diversity of traditional coloring, certain definite lines may be traced. One characteristic of it was a "violent supernaturalism," a conception of the promised good as something "externally transcendent," in contrast with this present world.[2] Both in its conception of the heavenly Jerusalem, and its expectation of the signs and means by which the kingdom of heaven was to descend to earth, the Messianic hope at this period was super-

[1] Heb. xi. 40.
[2] Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, Div. ii. vol. ii. p. 134.

naturalistic rather than ethical; a hope of supernatural interference and judgment rather than of moral progress and consummation. Another line, which had become hard and fixed in the Judaic hope, was marked by the idea of the national privilege. In the older prophetic literature a purer spiritual light had imparted even to the local coloring of the Messianic hope a certain humanness and universality. Israel also in its later subjection to the world-powers had been brought into a larger contact with cosmopolitan tendencies of thought and life, and had consequently been compelled to gain some broader knowledge of the relation of Israel to the great kingdoms of the world; but still its Messianic view had failed to reach a true ethical universality. The existence of a Messianic hope in the heart of Israel, and its revival and persistence in any form, is an historical sign of the divine working in the world; but in Judaism this higher hope had clothed itself in too political forms, and had become the expectation, not of a universal reign of love among men, but of the restoration of the true Israel.[1]

The Messiah was to appear as the world-ruler, and Israel was to have in his kingdom unquestioned and glorious primacy. He was not conceived as a Messiah Saviour, who through vicarious suffering should reconcile the world to God, but as a Messiah King, in whose righteousness indeed as well as power his chosen people should be restored to God's favor and glory. At his coming the four winds of heaven should bring back the faithful Israelites from the ends of the world to their promised inheritance.[2]

Through judgments and by acceptance of the Jewish religion, others than Israelites might indeed gain participation in the Messianic kingdom, but the glory of that kingdom was not spiritually and largely conceived as the promise of a redeemed humanity. The picture of the Messianic age

[1] "The kingdom of God is understood in a purely national way; and while the whole view of the future involves the ordinary ethical elements, the Messiah is in himself not specifically an ethical power." — Toy, *Judaism and Christianity*, p. 327.

[2] The hope of individual resurrection was developed also with this expectation of a future Messianic world-age.

on which Judaism looked with patient expectation, was a representation of the exaltation of Israel, rather than of the salvation of the world.[1]

To this feature should be added the dogmatic character of the Judaic Messianic expectation. Even their hope, as well as their law, had become, as Shürer remarks, "increasingly dogmatized." The "poetic picture" of the prophet had become the learned dogma of the scribe.[2] The later Rabbinical literature abounds in gross material imagery of the future glory of Zion.[3]

Doubtless the old Hebrew hope still held its supremacy in the days of Christ among many devout Israelites, and a profound national sense of the need of moral reform appears unmistakably in the preaching of John the Baptist; but the Messianic expectation which Jesus found among the scribes and teachers of the people was chiefly a hope of political deliverance and national dominion to be ushered in by signs from heaven, through supernatural power and judgments, rather than a profoundly spiritual and ethical, and a broadly human hope of redemption.

In seeking to recover the contemporaneous Jewish idea of the kingdom of God in the time of Christ, we should note also the legalization of the Judaic idea of God. The growth of Judaism and the Judaic veneration for the law, after Ezra's reformation, shows some marked resemblances to the growth in post-reformation Protestant theology of the legal conception of salvation, and particularly the tendency to formalize and almost to deify the literal inspiration and authority of the Scriptures.[4] Similarly the development of Judaism was distinctly marked by the tendency

[1] Edersheim, *Life of Christ*, vol. i. p. 164. [2] Schürer, *Ibid.* 134.

[3] See Weber, *Die Lehren des Talmud*, s. 356 f. It was described for instance as an age "in which all should eat cakes and dress in silks." Caution, however, should be exercised in inferring the opinions contemporary with Christ from the later Rabbinism.

[4] This has been often characterized as Bibliolatry. An example of it is to be found in the discussion which was raised among the Lutheran scholastics of the seventeenth century over the question whether one may call the Holy Scripture a creature. It was held that there was a mystical union of the Spirit with the word of God (*verbum dei esse aliquid dei*); that the Holy Scripture is not simply an instrument (*instrumentum inanimatum*). The doctrine of the communication of the divine idioms was carried over to the conception of the Holy Scripture. Dorner justly characterizes this tendency in the Lutheran orthodoxy as "a deification of the Holy Scripture." See his *Geschichte der protest. Theologie*, s. 553 f.

to lay the whole stress of religion on the law and its observance, while the freer, more prophetic elements of spiritual faith were withdrawn from the teaching of the schools. The law gains a position above everything else in Judaism. "Upon three things," said Simon the Just, "stands the world; upon the law, the worship of God (Temple-service), and well-doing." In this Rabbinical order the law is put first, worship second, and morality last. The law as the source of true life and condition of blessing was the highest good. The chief end of creation, according to the Rabbis, was the creation of the law. Many of the more extravagant sayings concerning the law which may be gathered from the Rabbinical literature are of a later date than the time of Christ; but they illustrate the tendency of Judaism to a legalization even of the idea of the living God, — a tendency which was already evident in the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees of our Lord's day.[1] Already in the heroic age of the Maccabees the law had become the war cry of the people, as it could not have been in the prophetic age.[2] In the later Judaism the law seems almost to have taken the place of God himself. Heaven became a high school for the study of the law; and God is represented as busied daily with the study of the law.[3] The centre of the true religion is transferred from the person to the law of God. The kingdom of heaven is the rule of the Law. Where His Law is, there God is.

Such was the revolution which Judaism finally wrought in the religion of the prophets. Jerusalem had killed the prophets; and it worshipped the letter which killeth.

We turn now from this brief survey of contemporary Judaism, which forms the background of the teaching of Jesus, to the moral ideal which we may discover shining in his gospel.

I. Jesus' Moral Ideal as disclosed in his doctrine of the Kingdom of God.

[1] See Schürer, *Ibid.* p. 93.

[2] 1 Mac. ii. 27; iii. 21. "And Mattathias cried throughout the city with a loud voice, saying, Whoever is zealous of the law, and maintaineth the covenant, let him follow me." "But we fight for our lives and our laws."

[3] Weber, *Ibid.* s. 154.

The gospel of the kingdom of God which Jesus came preaching was not wholly a new gospel, without points of continuity with the prophetic teaching, and historically unintelligible, like a revelation in a foreign language, to the common people of Judea. Jesus spoke in the vernacular of men's hearts, and his truth needed no scribe to interpret it to the villagers whom he met in the way, or the throngs who crowded him as he taught by the shore of the lake. His idea of the kingdom of God took root in the common ground of the Israelitish hope of the restoration of the throne of David. His doctrine of the kingdom continues the broader lines of the prophetic teaching concerning the Messianic age. As the loftiest mountain stands on the common earth, and springs from the habitable fields, so Jesus' moral ideal is human, and does not hang in mid-air like some gorgeous imagery of cloud. But no sooner do we recognize the familiar ideas on which Jesus rests his preaching of the gospel of the kingdom, than we perceive also how directly, and with what higher purpose, Jesus' teaching lifts itself out of the confusions of the Rabbinical traditions, and springs at once into a loftier and purer revelation of God's design; in its unique and unapproachable grandeur it dwarfs all the lesser heights to which the prophetic hopes had risen, and remains to this day the transcendent and commanding ideal of the possible exaltation of our humanity.

1. A peculiarity of Jesus' preaching of the gospel of the kingdom which immediately arrests attention is his announcement that it is now and here on this earth. It had been begun in the Old Dispensation, and it was to be completed in the future; but Jesus taught with remarkable insistence that it was an immediate and actual presence and reign of God among men.[1] To the common thought of the people the Messianic age was the world-age to come. The Baptist indeed, in immediate anticipation of Christ, had preached its near coming. But Jesus' announcement of its presence on this earth was different even from John the Baptist's proclamation that it was at hand. For Jesus

[1] Matt. iv. 17; x. 7; xii. 28; Mark i. 15; Luke xvii. 20-21.

proclaimed the actual existence of the kingdom of heaven on this earth as the reason for the discipleship which he required. He had not come, like the Baptist, to bring a new moral demand merely, or to enforce a stern requirement of repentance as a preparation for the coming of the kingdom; in Jesus' gospel the kingdom of God is already here; and because it is a present reality, the Lord asks for repentance and invites faith. The real presence of the power of heaven on earth is the joyous reason for Christian life and hope. "Make ye ready the way of the Lord," John the Baptist had cried in the wilderness. The voice of the last of the prophets was still a call for preparation for the coming of the kingdom. "The time is fulfilled," said Jesus, when he came bidding men repent and believe in the gospel. The Christian conception of life and its supreme good rests on this fundamental fact which Jesus announced, that the kingdom of God is not something wholly future, or remote from our present participation in it, but it is a real power and an actual reign of God already begun on earth, — a kingdom of heaven into which we may now enter, and which offers through citizenship in it some immediate possession of the highest good and present part in the eternal life.

2. Consequently Jesus' moral idealism was at the same time a moral realism, so far as he preached that the kingdom of heaven is already come. The ideal life of man is the life in Christ which is already begun. The ideal good is something here and now to be striven for and possessed. It was no dreamer speaking of strange, beautiful, far-off things, who spake as never man spake in Galilee; the Son of man carries indeed ever with him, in his inward consciousness of heaven, a vision of God and the blessed life, surpassing all prophetic conceptions;[1] yet Jesus, though having light supernal in his own inward being, does not separate himself from publicans and sinners, but graciously announces everywhere, and to whomever he meets, that this kingdom of God is at hand, and may be found among men, that it is a present light and a practicable truth for every man's life.

[1] See the remarkable declaration of John iii. 13.

The Christian conception of the highest good is, accordingly, both ideal and real; it is an ideal which is transcendent and at the same time immanent; an ideal which surpasses all known good, but which is also realized in any virtue and in any praise.[1]

3. Resembling this feature of Jesus' doctrine of the kingdom, and equally surprising, is his positiveness of thought and word concerning it. The moral positiveness of Jesus' ethical teaching, — this sunlit sureness of his moral ideal, — is something unexampled and superlative. None of our doubts hang mistily over his lofty ideal of the kingdom; our human questionings have sunk into silence in the "Verily, verily I say unto you" of his daily speech; his gospel of the kingdom of heaven from beginning to end, and around the whole broad circumference of it, lies before us like so much clear, sunny certainty. There is not a cloud in the Master's sky; there is no shadow over all his prospect.

This spiritual positiveness is unique in its kind. It is not like the blind confidence of the dogmatist, which is a too familiar folly among us; nor is it the self-assertion of spiritual ignorance, the vain superficiality of minds that do not feel the mystery of existence, nor know the deep things of God. Jesus' sureness of the Father's truth bears more resemblance to the quiet and reasoned confidence of positive science. It seems like the calm certainty of knowledge. This one man speaks from his experience of the unseen world, as other men will speak from their experience of the things that are seen. We cannot fail to be impressed with this objective tone of Jesus' language concerning things spiritual and eternal.

This objectiveness, moreover, of his thought and words was a general spiritual characteristic of Jesus' whole teaching, as the disciples received it and bare witness to it. So marked is this characteristic, so powerful was its spiritual effect upon those who were with him, that the disciples themselves ere long caught the Master's positive tone, and with a confidence begotten of his Spirit apostles speak

[1] Phil. iv. 8.

and write of those high and eternal things which they have seen and known. It is for theology to inquire whence this spiritual positiveness of the gospel of the kingdom of heaven had its source, and in what revelation of God its sufficient cause is to be discovered; but Christian ethics will show that the conception of the highest good, which is embodied in Jesus' gospel of the kingdom, possesses a positiveness, and has exercised a power of impressing itself upon generation after generation of men, which surpasses all the ideals of the ancient faiths and philosophies, and their influence; and which remains a present commandment and inspiration of virtue unequalled and unconquerable in the world. The moral conception of the kingdom of heaven in Jesus' first realization of it and through subsequent Christian experience of it, contains the materials of an unfinished yet positive science of the ideal. Still as of old they who hear his voice and who are of his truth, will say with a faith which may provoke denials, but which abides amid all doubts, as the mountains stand while the clouds pass, — 'The kingdom of God is here, and we know something of its power and its peace in our inmost souls; here, near at hand, known to us in our best moments and most Christian deeds, yet stretching far away into the unknown eternity around this world-age, is the reign of Christ and the love of God.'

4. Besides these more general truths and aspects of Jesus' revelation of the kingdom of heaven, we may observe in his gospel of it these particulars of his doctrine of the supreme good.

(1) It is personal good. To the Jewish mind the expectation of the kingdom of God had become too predominantly, as we have seen, a political hope; Jesus taught that the beginnings of the kingdom of heaven lie in personal character, and its good is to be realized through the new life and spiritual victory of the individual man. Jesus called his disciples by name, man by man, into his kingdom. He sought immediately for personal following rather than national restoration. He taught the Pharisees that the kingdom of God should not come with outward

pomp and observation; that it already was in the midst of them;[1] looking at the very souls of men he had said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."[2] His gospel of the rule of God became an intensely personal message. The kingdom of heaven among men is a temper of mind, a spiritual disposition, a state of heart. To enter into the kingdom is not to make a pilgrimage, or to go up through the gate into the holy city; but to come into a certain willingness of mind, to be of a certain spirit, to have a new heart. One is to continue a member of that kingdom, having the rights of its celestial citizenship, and being an heir of its promise, not by observing any outward ceremonial, but by abiding in the heavenly spirit of the kingdom. The kingdom of God is constituted of persons, and has its glory in personal worths and fidelities. The kingdom is to be built of persons having Christ-like characters. Once, by an act of memorable ethical teaching, and with his wonderful power of making the least incidents disclose the largest truths, Jesus showed to his disciples the only good which should be the object of their ambition, when he took a little child and put him in the midst of them, and said, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."[3] In that simple, divine way Jesus revealed what essentially and eternally the kingdom of heaven is: it was not to be a restored Hebrew commonwealth with its thrones of dominion; not a glorified earthly city which shall exercise lordship over the nations, and in which worldly ambition may still find empire; it is not the supreme political good which the Sadducees covet, nor the reign of the law which the Pharisees exalt above the claims of humanity and the fatherhood of God. Jesus' teaching of the nature of the supreme ethical good, when he put a little child as the greatest in the midst of the disciples, was the idealization of the pure heart and the loving, trustful spirit. We must be born anew of the Spirit to see the kingdom;[4] it can only be seen by those who have hearts to see it; for

[1] Luke xvii. 21. [2] Matt. v. 3. [3] Matt. xviii. 3. [4] John iii. 3.

the essential reality and the eternal blessedness of it consist in having the Spirit of Christ.

(2) The kingdom of God is a human good as well as an individual attainment. It is, as has just been remarked, a reign of God in the personal life, and a good to be acquired through individual character; yet it is likewise a kingdom or society of men, and its good is to be secured in the larger life of humanity. The prophets had gained some conception of the human universality of the coming Messianic blessing; but Jesus' gospel of the kingdom for all nations went far beyond the broadest lines of the prophetic thinking in its pure and absolute humanness. He brought this feature of his moral ideal into the sharpest contrast with the current Judaism of his day by his quiet, bold word that the Sabbath was made for man. He thus selected the one institution which was the sacred heritage of Judaism, and which the law had hedged about with painstaking punctiliousness, and he freed that most religious institution from its Jewish exclusiveness, and brought that treasure of the kingdom forth for man's common use, making its divine obligation consist in its serviceableness to man. The kingdom, whose gospel he came preaching, was thus proclaimed in the most unmistakable manner to be throughout a kingdom for man, — the reign of God which shall be also the true reign of man on the earth.

This humanness of Jesus' gospel corresponds to his personal identification with humanity. The Messiah who has come to establish the kingdom of heaven as an ever present and continuous spiritual reality on earth, Himself belongs to humanity, sums up our humanity, represents humanity before God.

The highest good, then, as it is presented to our thought and desire in Jesus' doctrine of the kingdom, more than in the broadest conceptions of any of the prophets before him, is social, human good; it is no ideal of life to be attained by men individually, apart from the perfection of humanity, and without participation in the great human whole of being and its redemption. The harvest is not the individual ingathering, but the end of the world. The

Christian conception of good is to be realized in the consummation of the ages of our one human history; it is good for man, God's love for the world.[1]

We are to receive our personal part and to share individually in this human weal and perfection through lives bound up dutifully with the lives of others, and in the fulfilments of our common human relations, obligations, and destiny. The Christian Ideal of the coming world-age and its blessedness is no proud philosophic hope of some spiritual attainment of the rare and favored few; all men's paths run by the open doors of the kingdom of heaven; we are to be made perfect as we shall enter into one salvation, and have fellowship in one great redemption.

It is true, but it only serves to bring out more signally this ideal of Jesus' gospel for the world, that the disciples at first were far from comprehending his ideal of a saved humanity. It is a striking evidence of the originality of Jesus' teaching that the disciples in whose narratives the life of Christ is immediately reflected, did not always understand the simplicity that was in Christ, nor know what spirit he was of. It is true, and it shows Jesus' unique superiority to all the teaching and thought then current in Judea, that his departure from his own, and the day of Pentecost, and the lessons of their work in preaching his gospel, were needed in order to bring to their knowledge the universal elements of truth which had from the first been present, dimly apprehended by them, if understood at all, in the daily teaching of their Master. Even now, after centuries have passed, the Church has much to learn of the breadth and the pure sunny humanness of Jesus' gospel. Where is there to be found a social ideal like this Christian Ideal of humanity, and the salvation of humanity, which Jesus came preaching in the gospel of the kingdom of heaven?

(3) While this kingdom belongs thus to humanity, and in its idea and purpose is for man, it is also something

[1] Whether any individuals may through persistent sin fall out of this true humanity and its consummation, is another question; the point above is that no man can attain to the supreme good, can have everlasting life, except by having part in man's redemption from evil.

superhuman. It is the kingdom, that is, of God for man — the kingdom of heaven established and advancing on earth. Jesus' ideal for man had its centre of light and radiant power in God. The coming of the kingdom is a revelation of God. This good comes from above, and is to be gradually naturalized in the Christian life and institutions of humanity. It does not come of flesh and blood, but of the Spirit. We must not disguise this contrast between the Christian ideal and the best scientific hope of humanity at the very point where the two bear otherwise the closest resemblance. There is a scientific humanitarianism, very like the Christian, which our age has won. The supreme ethical good is conceived in terms of the worthiest happiness of the greatest number. The ideal which all our sciences should serve, is the largest possible fulfilment of the life of humanity. This is also a Christian conception, and herein evolutionary and Christian ethics are looking in the same direction. But the resemblance is framed in a larger contrast. Christian humanitarianism is the hope of the glorification of man through the Spirit of God. Jesus' gospel of the kingdom of heaven is not the same as a gospel of some possible better kingdom to spring up from the earth. It is the annunciation of a spiritual power in man working for a good which is here and now to be realized, but which is not to be limited by the conditions of present environment, and which has in itself the potency and the promise of higher spiritual life and perfection. As the sky is to be found at every point when we lift our eyes to the horizon, and the whole earth has its existence in the sky which encompasses it; so when we look to the end of any human effort, and reach in our thought the horizons of all earthly perfection, Christian ethics beholds this good of humanity contained in a larger prospect, and having its place and order as a part of the whole kingdom of heaven. We belong to this kingdom of heaven as men who are immortals. We receive these present beginnings of character and its moral good as the heirs of an eternal inheritance.

In the teaching of Jesus two phrases for the reign of

the perfect good occur, — the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven. The redeemed and perfected society of men is the kingdom of God, because it is of God and from Him in its origin, its conservation, its growth, and its promise of final consummation. It is the kingdom of heaven, because it is heavenly in its spirit, and celestial also in its hope of life beyond all death.[1]

(4) A further characteristic of Jesus' ideal to be observed in his doctrine of the kingdom of God, lies in his teaching concerning the manner of its coming, or the law of the realization of the ideal good among men. This characteristic becomes striking when we compare the teaching of the gospels in this respect with ideas of the Messianic time which became current among the Jews in the early days of Christianity.

According to a popular Jewish belief, at the time of the Babylonian captivity, when the holy city had been laid waste and the temple destroyed, the tabernacle and ark of God, the two tables of the law, the altar, all the holy vessels, and the insignia of the high priest, were carried off, and safely hidden in the earth either at Mt. Nebo, or, as the Samaritans affirmed, in their holy mountain of Gerizim.[2] The recovery of these sacred vessels from the earth in which they were hidden was to signalize the restoration of the kingdom. Pilate had lost his office and been sent in banishment to Gaul, not because he had refused Roman justice to Jesus whom he delivered to be crucified, but on account of his cruel massacre at Mt. Gerizim of Samaritans who had gone in triumphal procession to dig up the hidden glory of the Messianic kingdom from the ground.[3] That was one Jewish way of praying for the coming of the kingdom; — restore the past; give us back the former power; recover the sacred vessels; dig in the past

[1] By the Rabbis the expressions kingdom, kingdom of God, and kingdom of heaven, seem to have been used interchangeably, but to have been distinguished from the kingdom of the Messiah, or future Messianic world-age. Heaven was often used instead of the name of God. See references in Edersheim's *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. i. p. 267.

[2] See 2 Mac. ii. 2–8; *Apocalypse of Baruch*, vi. 7–10.

[3] Ewald, *Hist. of Israel*, v. p. 69.

to find the future. So the Jews guarded the tombs of the prophets, and hoped that the signs of the nation's glory might be exhumed from some cave of the earth. Many looked also in an opposite direction for the Messianic world-age. In the days of tribulation they had imagined that the glory of the kingdom was transferred bodily to heaven, and they expected that at the time appointed it would descend with sudden and supernatural power from heaven. According to one tradition, the sacred vessels had been taken up into heaven, and were there kept until they should be restored at the coming of the Messiah. While the Samaritans were digging for the sacred treasures at Mt. Gerizim, the Pharisees in Jerusalem were looking for a sign from heaven. In this expectation of the Rabbis the national hope had been celestialized,[1] but not spiritualized.

The heavenly Jerusalem they thought had stood originally in paradise before Adam fell. Later it had been shown to Abraham in a vision of the night. Moses also saw it on Mt. Sinai. Ezra also saw it in a vision. It exists still in the heavens. In the Messianic day this heavenly city is to descend to earth and to take the place of the Jerusalem which now is. Schürer, *opus cit.* Div. ii. vol. ii. p. 169; *Apocalypse of Baruch*, iv. 2–6. By some supernal means, according to this mode of expectation, the final and supreme good in the coming world-age is to be brought down ready-made from heaven.

Jewish teachers, it is true, regarded the Messianic age as delayed by the sins of the people; the Rabbis said, "If all Israel should together for one whole day offer a common repentance, redemption through the Messiah would follow. If Israel should keep only two Sabbaths, as is fitting, they would at once be redeemed." Weber, *opus cit.* s. 334. Beyschlag says with truth that in the sensuously formed expectation of the people the material was the substance, and the spiritual was the accident. *Leben Jesus*, i. s. 335.

Neither of these modes of conceiving the restoration of God's rule is ethical. No obedience to a law of moral progress enters into such prayer for the coming of the reign of love on earth.

We need only point out how striking a contrast is presented by the whole teaching of Jesus concerning the coming of his kingdom. Sacrifice is the method of his rule.

[1] Ewald, *Hist. of Israel*, vi. p. 108.

His thought of his own sufferings and death, of the mission of his disciples, of the witness of his Spirit, is profoundly ethical; and his prophetic discourses concerning the impending judgments and the end of the world, as well as his parables of the increase of his kingdom, show his reliance upon moral forces, and his knowledge of the profound ethical processes through which God's will is to be done on earth as in heaven. The Lord's prayer, Thy kingdom come, is a prayer of moral consecration on the lips of every disciple who repeats it in the Master's spirit, and who would do God's will on earth. The catastrophes which the gospels predict are primarily ethical ones; the world-age to come is to be preceded by a moral judgment; the gospel is to pervade humanity as a moral leaven; both the wheat and the tares are to grow together until the harvest. Jesus had taught that his kingdom was already present when he stood among men in the power of the Spirit of God. And it was to come to men without observation as they should receive his Spirit. The law of its progress was to be the law of a spiritual coming. The kingdom of heaven is present in any spiritual presence on this earth. It becomes real in the Christian spirit of a society or a nation. Not through the restoration of any sacred treasures of a buried past, not at once with sudden signs from heaven, are we to look for the promised redemption[1]; but the highest good of which man is capable, and of which prophets have dreamed, is to be realized on earth through the gradual and increasing spiritualization of the life of humanity. In the new hearts of men, in the better spirit of the laws, and the more Christian cast of the social institutions of the world, we are to discern the signs of the growing fulfilment of the prayer which the Son of man has taught us to pray to the Father in heaven, "Thy kingdom come."

This process of the gradual spiritualization of life is to be conceived as a purely religious, ethical process; and as such, Jesus' idea of the method through which man is to attain to the ideal ends of his being, differs by the whole

[1] Cf. Matt. xxiv. 27 with xiii. 30–33.

diameter of the ethical idea from the worldly and supernaturalistic conceptions which were becoming current amid the later spiritual hopelessness of Judaism.

The New Testament ideal, then, of the highest good, so far as it is opened to our analysis of it in Jesus' preaching of the gospel of the kingdom of God, is personal and human, yet transcendent and spiritual; an ideal of humanity to be reached through ethical processes, to become real as the reign of love and the moral presence of God on earth.

II. Jesus' moral ideal is presented to us in another form in his saying, in the Sermon on the Mount, that men should be perfect even as their Father which is in heaven is perfect.

The text may be read either as commandment or promise; and in either case it is one of the most remarkable of the sayings of Jesus. The moral originality of it appears at a glance the instant we conceive of this single word of the Lord as set in the midst of the thoughts of the ancient philosophers, or try to read it into the traditions of the scribes and Pharisees. We need to recall the scene where this revelation of the Christian ideal for men was first given, and remember to what people it was announced, in order that we may apprehend its full import, and appreciate its moral originality.[1] Had these words been spoken by the Master at some moment of moral enthusiasm only to a few choice spirits, they might not have seemed so impossible. But the multitudes listened, astonished at his teaching.[2] No wonder that even the doctrine of Jesus seemed miraculous to people accustomed to the words of the scribes. For this is the moral wonder of Jesus' ideal that it was held up — a pure commandment and promise of perfect good — before all men's eyes; that his heavenly ideal of man was not lowered or abated before any publican or sinner.

[1] The exegesis of Matt. v.–vii. fails to interpret Christ's thought almost in proportion as it remains critical. Christ's *preaching* needs to be translated into *sermonic* language, aglow with present experience of life.

[2] The sermon was for the multitude, although Jesus taught directly the disciples. Cf. Matt. v. 1 with vii. 28–29.

The Christian Ideal would seem remarkable enough in its application to men, had the word of the Christ stopped only with the thought of some possible perfection for them; but it becomes more significant by reason of the moral rule or standard of perfection which is immediately associated with the commandment, — "As your heavenly Father is perfect."[1] In these latter words we find revealed a distinctive sign and excellence of the Christian moral ideal. It is an absolute ideal; no law can be more imperative than is this commandment of perfection. Kant did not frame a categorical maxim of duty which is at once so simple, so universal, and so authoritative as this word of Christ to the people. Moral philosophy can reach no more exalted or comprehensive generalization of duty. It is high as the heavens. It is pure as light. Viewed as the general form of the moral imperative, nothing can be more comprehensive. Scientific ethics in its induction of the law of good from the numberless particulars of human relations, can find no larger expression for its generalization of duty as the highest efficiency of the whole social organism than is this commandment of the gospel, — Ye shall be perfect, according to the perfection of the Creator of all. That is perfection of man according to his type, in conformity to the highest idea of his being, for his original and archetypal being is divine; and such fulfilment of the true type of humanity is the broadest and most comprehensive idea of the good which any scientific generalization can compass.

While, however, this commandment yields to no moral conception as an abstract form for duty, or universal maxim of conduct, it possesses another quality which such moral generalizations lack, and the absence of which renders them comparatively powerless as motives in conduct. The added words of Jesus take the idea of perfection out of abstract generality, and cold legality, and inspire his commandment of perfection with the warmth of personality whose life is to be realized in love. For this is no un-

[1] See also Luke vi. 36, where the mercy of the Father is made the standard of human mercy.

human, or vague philosophic conception of the Godhead with which Jesus completes his moral commandment. The image of perfection which he sets immediately before humanity in its imperfection is not impassive law, nor is it exaltation even of divinity in its unheeding absoluteness and awful glory of self-completion. The Father, and the perfection of His Fatherhood, Jesus brings close to man; by his perfect Fatherhood man shall learn at once the measure of his duty and the possibilities of his moral sonship. In the Father's likeness, and according to the Father's manner of being perfect, ye also shall be perfect. The nature of this perfection we may learn as we seek to apprehend ethically Jesus' idea of God. But without anticipating ourselves, it is enough to remark at this point that the context of the teaching in which this moral ideal for the people was given, brings to man a new ethical religious truth, opens a larger, happier revelation of God as love. The Father in heaven, in whose name Jesus blessed his disciples, is not perfect as law, but as love — perfect in love's way and measure, as their Father who knows what they need. In the same way, by the same method, men are to seek for the moral end of their being. The one thing which the best of those Jews, the most righteous among them, had not learned, and which no scribe could teach, was the law and the measure of perfection through love. Jesus' commandment included in its requirement of perfection a method also of its possible fulfilment; — God's Fatherhood was the standard, and life like the Father's in love should be the method of its realization. As it is presented accordingly in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' ideal good for men is not only a conception of some absolute worth which shall command us in the authority of duty; it is not merely the exaltation of an idea of perfect being conforming to its original type and harmonious in all its functions; it is not some vague and vast conception of ultimate social good, which shall be attained though individuals fail, and only the few who survive at the end may rejoice in it; it is the ideal of the perfect person, and the perfect life which is the open pos-

sibility of the moral universe for all men; the ideal for God's children which has its revelation and its attraction in the sure, central fact of God's perfect personality. The Christian Ideal, according to this teaching of Jesus, is warm and vital as with a personal love. It is the moral ideal for men which is revealed in the Fatherhood of God.

III. The ideal of the highest good receives further interpretation in the words characteristic of Jesus' teaching, 'life,' 'eternal life.'

These words occur in the earlier sources of Matthew's and Luke's gospels with sufficient frequency to indicate that they must often have been used in some sense by Jesus. That their peculiar use in the fourth gospel reflects an aspect of Jesus' original teaching, is not to be denied simply on the ground that it is characteristic of John: on the contrary, this is to be assumed not only from the general evidence of an original apostolic source of the fourth gospel, but also from the agreement of John's conception of eternal life with the whole teaching of Jesus as recorded by the synoptists, and the fitness of this conception to explain the subsequent apostolic development of the idea of spiritual life with Christ. This is well argued by Wendt, *Die Lehre Jesu*, ii. ss. 196 ff.

Without entering into the question, which belongs rather to dogmatics, whether the adjective, eternal, which appears in the gospels in connection with the substantive, life, involves or not of itself the idea of everlasting existence, we observe that the two words together contain a moral positive, and are meant to describe the highest end and fullest conceivable good of existence. The two words, as combined in the gospels, are used to signify life at its highest power and in its completest conceivable realization. An alternative phrase, which occurs, according to an approved reading, in one of the epistles serves to bring out clearly this moral positive in the gospel conception of eternal life: "That they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed."[1]

The love of life is not only an instinct of nature, but it possesses moral significance. Give us life — more life and richer — life of wider scope — life full as an ocean-tide — life unbounded, limitless, free; — what mortal man has not felt at times as a moral passion of his soul this hungering and

[1] 1 Tim. vi. 19.

thirsting after life which shall be life indeed? The Christian Ideal does not ignore nor condemn, nor set aside as insignificant, this more than animal passion of the soul for life. Rather it takes it up, expands and glorifies it in its promise of the eternal life. Our earthly task, according to Christian ethics, is to lay hold on life.[1] Life, not death, is good.

We may distinguish more particularly certain moral elements which are contained in Jesus' words, "eternal life," "hath eternal life," "hath passed out of death into life."[2]

(1) As already suggested the thought is plainly involved in these expressions that life is a good. Personal life is something morally to be desired. Our love of life is a moral love of it. Life, which for us, and in our consciousness of it, means not merely existence, but continued personal being, is itself an object of ethical desire; it is a good will of God to be realized in the preservation of his children. In a certain degree, within the limits of created being, there has been imparted to the moral person the gift of having life in himself, — a power of life which in its original and creative fulness belongs to the nature of the Godhead.[3] To the Son who represents the moral creation and is its end and fulness, God has granted this power of having life in himself.

Personal life, once gained, is a good not to be lost. Life so far as it has been realized in conscious personality is to be preserved, and, if morally kept, it shall not fall backwards down the scale of creation. To whatever degree life has been as yet realized in personality, to that measure of attainment it is to be held up; it is not to be suffered to lapse, to fall below itself, to sink from the plane of personality to the level of the mere existence from which it has been uplifted into self-consciousness. Life, personal life, is to be regarded as an achievement of spirit, itself the attainment of a creative end of being. And this achievement of the spirit is to be preserved in the final good.[4]

[1] 1 Tim. vi. 12.
[2] Matt. xxv. 46; John xvii. 3; vi. 54; v. 24.
[3] John v. 26.
[4] Luke xxi. 19; the soul is to be won.

There may be still higher possibilities of life unknown to us through any earthly experience; but this sure and supreme good of our spiritual experience of life, which has been reached and won at the height of the creation to which we have been exalted, is in its nature an eternal good; — the Christian ideal may be contained in these two words, eternal life. And in fulfilment of the continual prophecy of life from its first stirring in matter, and of the whole struggle and ascent of life upwards, the Christ might say, "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly."[1]

(2) The promise of life contains also, as an element in the Christian conception of the highest good, the hope of life as a good to be delivered from evil. The Christian moral ideal is opposed to death and the dominion of death. Life, which is good in itself, shall be delivered from the power of the evil. Freedom from pain and death, the present enemies of life, — an ultimate emancipation of life from the grasp of anything unfriendly to it, — is involved in the very idea of life as a good in itself; that idea requires the hope of deliverance from the law of death which obtains in nature up to man, but which, so far as it has gained power over man, seems to be a denial of the good of which he has become conscious, and an inexplicable contradiction of the freedom of his will. According to these brief gospel phrases, "eternal life," "life indeed," the Christian Ideal of the good is an assurance of the final ascent of life above the lower dominion of death; it is the assertion that the law of life is superior to the law of death; that life, and not death, is lord in the realm of moral personality; that moral good shall be held finally in no dependent and fearful existence which the least thing in nature may wound, and a mere breath may destroy; but it is to be realized in spiritual independence of suffering and some future possession of being above all possible reach or thought of death.[2]

(3) The idea of eternal life which appears in the gospels is brought into close relation to the further idea of spiritual

[1] John x. 10. [2] John vi. 50; Rom. vi. 8–9; 1 Cor. xv. 22–58.

renewal. It is life not only redeemed from evil, but a new life proceeding from a birth of the Spirit.[1] Hence, as we shall have to notice more particularly in subsequent discussions, the truth of a salvation from evil to newness of life, enters into and colors the whole Christian conception of the highest good.

(4) The Christian Ideal, as eternal life, involves still further a positive conception of life as the fulness and completeness of personal relationships.

There is a vast difference between mere existence and life. A tree exists in the winter; it lives in every leafy bough of it in the month of June. The New Testament conception of eternal life is existence in its full blossom and fruitfulness. The prospect of life which Jesus held before the faith of his disciples was no colorless promise, no unsubstantial and meaningless hope of far-off felicity. He revealed life in its fulness and fruition. The idea of the completion of all the familiar good of personal relationships gives glow and home-like cheer to the Christian's hope of eternal life. The supreme good is no philosophic life of pale contemplation, or loss of personal consciousness in some infinite passiveness of being; it is living at its highest, intensest, and fullest, in all that makes life worth living. The eternal life, which is the highest good, is life quickened in all the powers of one's being, and entering with ever fresh and quick responsiveness into the personal relationships in which our humanity is realized. The highest good, in the Christian conception of it, becomes thus in one word intensely vital. It is being, moral being, personality, vitalized to the utmost.

That such was Jesus' thought of the eternal life appears from the words which he used in connection with his promises to his disciples. His descriptive words concerning the life which he had come to give abundantly, are not borrowed from the splendors of material things. He has little or nothing to say of thrones, and riches, and spacious mansions, and a city of golden resplendence; these common and material images of future felicity rarely

[1] Cf. John iii. 3, with iii. 15.

occur, or are touched only by a passing word in the Lord's speech concerning the heaven from which he came, and in which his heart always dwelt. But when he would prepare his own for his absence for time's "little while" from them, he drops entirely the splendid imagery in which the prophets had conceived of the future glory of Zion; Jesus uses the simplest, most personal words as his words of promise; he chooses vital things as the signs of his presence; he describes the life into which he should ascend, and in which they too were to have part, in the terms of personal companionship. These relations of living friendship and communion constitute heaven's supreme good; in these relationships of most worth to human hearts its final felicity shall be made perfect: "Because I live, ye shall live also"; "And again a little while, and ye shall see me"; "I go unto the Father"; "Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you"; "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one."[1] So Jesus makes, not all manner of precious stones, but the personal pronouns, his symbols of heaven. The communion of chosen and consecrated friends, for whom the Master blessed the wine of life, is the prophetic picture, which our Lord has given us, of the kingdom of heaven when he shall come again.[2]

This positive content of Jesus' idea of the highest moral good as the perfectness of personal life in the communion of men with God, and with one another in God's light, surpasses imagination, yet it comes close home to human hearts; though it is the ideal of a transcendent perfectness, it is at the same time real and near as the simplest relationship of love in which a man may now find his truest and best life.

The moral advantage of this Christian Ideal is that it enables us to lay hold of the surpassing thought of perfection by those elements in our experience which are now most real and of known worth to us. This is a positive human conception of good, though supernal, which is brought to us in the promise of eternal life. An image of it near, and

[1] John xiv.-xvii. [2] Matt. xxvi. 29.

real, and true, may be found in the human home. In Christian ethics the home becomes itself image and type of the highest good, the sign of heaven on earth.

One may look in vain in all other ethics, ancient or modern, for a conception of the supreme good so vital, so human, so home-like as this. Nowhere has life been so thoroughly, broadly, and transcendently, yet humanly conceived as in itself and its completion the very essence and substance of the good.

(5) This ideal of the eternal life as the fulness and perfectness of personal good involves necessarily as tributary to it, or as elements in which it shall realize itself, the moral ideas of holiness, righteousness, benevolence, love. But it contains more than any of these words alone may express; it is the substantive of which they are the predicates; it is that fulness and positiveness of good in which all these moral elements consist; for it is a living good, a living perfectness, a living harmony of being; it is life, conscious, complete, personal, in the communion of life. The nearest approach which can be made to a definition of it is contained in that profound word of Jesus by which life is described as a knowing God; — "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ."[1] Life is knowing — not a knowledge of things merely, not a science of the creation; — to master and possess a science is not to live; — life, eternal life, is a *personal* knowing the only true God, and Him in whom man and God are one. And this thought, which was always in the mind of Jesus, of the true life in oneness with God, finds reflection in the words of the beloved disciple: "This is the true God, and eternal life. My little children, guard yourselves from idols."[2] In comparison with this knowing the true God, and eternal life, all other knowledge is idolatry; all other goods which are not possessed as parts and elements of this supreme good are idols.

[1] John xvii. 3. Wendt argues that by these words Jesus does not declare in what the eternal life consists, but in what lies the means to win it, *Lehre Jesu*, ii. s. 190. But the words, "This is," etc., imply something concerning the nature of the life. See Weiss, *opus cit.* §. 208.

[2] 1 John v. 20–21.

(6) In this conception of the highest good as eternal life, is involved also the idea of it as in part a present reality and an immediate possession.

This conception of eternal life as a present life of faith, seems peculiar to the fourth gospel. While the other disciples understood Christ to say that the righteous shall go into eternal life (Matt. xxv. 46), John remembers that the Master had likewise spoken of the believer as one who hath eternal life, who is passed from death unto life (John iii. 36; v. 24). The synoptists, however, represent Jesus as teaching that the kingdom of God is in part already come (Luke xvii. 21): similarly John speaks of the eternal life, which, in his conception of salvation, had taken almost entirely the place of the idea of the kingdom. See Weiss, *opus cit.* s. 208 (a).

We may have the eternal good in some measure of it in time. We do not yet possess it completely, nor in its moral perfectness above all touch of evil and possibility of loss; but we may have it now, and have it really, though not fully; we may have it as we have love, not in its whole purity and power, yet in some living and growing truth of it. In Christian ethics the ideal good is not, as sometimes men have erroneously supposed, a distant felicity only — some crown of happiness hereafter to be received; but it is a life which is already life indeed, — a true, and eternal kind of life to be begun now in the truth and worth of all pure personal relationships, to be kept alike in the joy and through the sorrow which falls upon love, and to be made perfect in the completions of futurity.

We do not, therefore, fall into a contradiction of speech, or use a meaningless phrase, when we say that we may have now eternal life. A man has entered into the eternal life so far as he possesses the love which constitutes its essential good; a man falls out of the eternal life when he falls from love, and enters into hate which is the denial of all good. Through hate we pass under the dominion of death; in love we pass into a life of eternal possibilities, which is in its own good of an eternal nature, as the true God, who is love, is from everlasting to everlasting. Thomas Erskine gave striking expression to this truth when he wrote: "Eternal life is living in the love of

God; eternal death is living in self; so that a man may be in eternal life or eternal death for ten minutes, as he changes from the one state to the other."[1]

In other words, the positive ethical content of Jesus' word, eternal life, is not the time-element, but the personal element of life: — eternal life consists, in its essential content, in knowing God who is love.[2] And this in part may be a present knowledge. We need not wait for death to know what true life is; we have not to pass through some mystery of bodily change before we can begin to live with our fellow-men and unto God in that relationship of love which is already true life, and as such is eternal in its good.

The time-element in this conception of eternal life does not belong to its positive ethical contents, but it may to its metaphysical conditions. Finite moral life may possibly never become wholly independent of a metaphysical condition of succession. Time may always be for finite persons the necessary form for the realization of that eternal life which consists in love. Yet in true life we even now grow conscious of a certain relative independence of time. We subordinate the element of time to the life itself, and almost at times forget time. Life in its highest spiritual intensity becomes a certain unconsciousness of time. We triumph over the years in memory; we leap over the succession of events in hope; love needs no dates, but is an ever present reality. Time is relative to the thinking mind; we do not live always by our watches, but often by our thoughts. The hours become as moments in intense thought; or to anxious love the moments may become as hours, and time in turn gain overpowering mastery. While our experience which lies now wholly in the order of time, does not enable us indeed to conceive positively of a spiritual manner of existence which shall be wholly raised out of time, and be timeless life; yet our present limited independence of time, our power to make our own time in thought, is sufficient to suggest that some future, higher mode of spiritual perfectness may become possible to us, which shall be far more independent of the flight of the stars, and not be bound in necessity so limiting, and often so impatiently felt by us, to the order of outward successions. Though we must remain always finite, we may become more Godlike in greater spiritual independence of temporal successions.

(7) In Jesus' thought of the highest good as eternal life there is involved also the conception of blessedness as its element and atmosphere.[3] The true life does not con-

[1] *Letters*, p. 425. [2] John xvii. 3; 1 John v. 20.

[3] The promise of rewards appears more prominently in the earlier sources than in the fourth gospel: Matt. v. 12; xix. 29; Mark x. 30; Luke xviii. 30; but John notices the joy and peace of the life of Christ: xiv. 27; xv. 11.

sist in the happiness of it, yet it is not to be conceived as realized without happiness. Blessedness is both its natural result and its necessary form of existence. Happiness is not the material but the formal nature of the true, the eternal life. In proportion as the true life is lived by any moral being, in that proportion it brings happiness, and creates an atmosphere of joy; in proportion as the true life shall be lived throughout the moral universe, will the conditions which occasion unhappiness disappear. The two conceptions, eternal life and blessedness, belong together, and are necessary each to the other, as matter and form; as being and the element in which being exists; or as light and ethereal motion. God, the good, is over all, God blessed forever.

Nothing has worked more moral harm in religion than false ideas of this relation and unity, as of matter and form, between true life and its happiness. If the good be held apart from all thought of happiness as in itself above all to be desired, without regard to the conditions under which it may find its perfect realization, then a false asceticism may result, and an unnatural divorce of happiness from the moral ideal avenges itself always in a loss of some virtues of the true life. Character was not made to grow in a vacuum, but in a sunny air. The endeavor to rise above all thought of happiness in morals ends in a fall from the full idea of moral manhood in the world. The idle cloistered saint, the unclean and uncomfortable monk, the soul whose moral life has been stunted and starved in the midst of human relations which are good, is the offspring of this illicit sundering of the ideas of virtue and happiness. On the other hand, nothing can be more morally enervating and deadening in religion than a pursuit of heaven for its supposed reward, or from the desire merely to escape hell-fire. Jesus, while on earth, had occasion to rebuke those who sought him for the sake of the loaves and the fishes; the disposition would be as reprehensible in the disciples if they should seek the Christ for the sake of the heavenly loaves and fishes. To be religious for the purpose of grasping

some future reward while holding on as tightly as possible to present happiness, would prove disastrous, both here and there, to the life of love which is the eternal life. Other-world selfishness deserves all the satire with which it has been visited by the scientific moralists.

A healthful and sound Christian consciousness does not neglect or confound either of these elements of the true, or eternal kind of life. It consists in perfectness of being, and it is moral perfectness rejoicing in the sunshine of God's presence. It is essentially virtue according to the image of Christ; and with Christ it ascends, as to its native element, into heaven. The blessing cannot be realized without the virtue: as the sunshine could not be seen except by the eye open to its beams. Scientific morality least of all should find any difficulty or reproach in this correlation in the Christian Ideal of perfect being and final blessedness; for it is only carrying out to full fruition the truth, which runs through and through the whole evolutionary conception of the universe, of the adaptation of being to its favoring conditions, and the reign of each successive species in its fitting environment. The Christian doctrine of heaven, in its conception of virtue and happiness, is the scientific evolutionary optimism carried out to the last and highest survival of moral being in its consummate blessedness.

Thus far we have been studying the Christian Ideal of the supreme good to be desired as it lies evidently before us in certain words of the gospels. But the ideal which shines from the gospels is not in word only, but in power. It is given to us not in the doctrine only of Jesus, but in his character.

IV. The Christian Ideal is Jesus himself as he was known on earth by those who were eye-witnesses of his glory, and as he has been glorified through his Spirit in the adoration of his Church.

In order to perceive this moral ideal in its personal revelation in Christ we do not need to borrow from the theology of the Church that careful doctrine of his person which was embodied as the result of three centuries of

thought in the Nicene creed. It is enough if we can draw near the humanly divine character which dwelt with men, — separate from all their sinfulness, and full of grace and truth, — of which the disciples were eye-witnesses. Jesus himself, coming from the Father and going to the Father, living while on earth as one in heaven,[1] — known on earth by disciples whose lives were transformed by their knowledge of him, and manifested in the Spirit to succeeding generations as theLord and Saviour of men — winning ever as of old the first affections of childhood's innocence, commanding the passions of men, and followed by woman's utmost devotion — Jesus himself is the ideal of Christian history; he is the Light, itself unequalled and unexplained, whose luminous mystery of divinity, shining full in the thought of the world, makes all lesser mysteries of our mortality become bright as with the presence of God. The personal ideal of the perfect life was revealed indeed in the Christ under historical conditions and within the limitations of time and space. The historical Christ must appear at a definite place and time. He must work the works of God on a single field and among a chosen people. He must needs suffer on earth, and die as a man, before he can rise, and ascend, and come again as the Lord from heaven. Amid these earthly limitations, and under these historical conditions, "the Light which lighteth every man, coming into the world," was revealed, and the Highest Good gave itself as example and law of our life; but once revealed, it abides as the inspiration of goodness in men. The influence of Jesus is a perpetual influence; in His Name is named whatever is most worthy our consecration of power, our devotion of heart, our endless endeavor of life.

Yet because the Christian ethical ideal is thus personally realized in Christ, and personally operative in the Spirit of Christ, for this very reason it does not admit of complete definition, nor can those who see it most purely, or whose lives imitate it most powerfully, express or describe it to others in any adequate form of words. For there must

[1] John iii. 13.

always be something beyond definition in personal life and its virtue. No rich personality has ever put itself wholly into speech. In personal love and influence there is always more of the Spirit than has been measured, waiting to be revealed. Of the supreme Life and the virtue which went out from it, we must still say, as St. Hilary wrote of old, "We are constrained to extend the lowliness of our human speech to things which are inexpressible; so that what should be kept in devout contemplation is brought to the peril of human utterance."[1]

Thus the Christian Ideal, which was incarnate in the Person of the Christ, goes ever before his Church, in fulness of life and spiritual splendor, as the glory of the Lord still to be revealed in his future coming, surpassing the hope of the apostles, the joy of the martyrs, the vision of the saints. The Christ in the spiritual consciousness of the Church, loved, dreamed of, followed, worshipped, hoped for as the final and full revelation of the glory of God, appears even greater and more divine than the Jesus whom disciples knew and followed on earth; — an apostle could say, "Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more."[2] The Christian Ideal in its still unrealized and inexpressible glory and transcendence is the Christ known after the Spirit. Our ideal is the Christ sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Such being in general the Christian Ideal in its historical revelation, we pass next to a description of three of the more important characteristics of its contents which are to be observed in the Christian consciousness. The Christian Ideal, in these aspects of it, may then be compared with moral ideals which have been gained independently of Christianity, or which spring up on the borders of the influence of Christian ideas.

[1] *De Trin.* ii. 2.

[2] 2 Cor. v. 16.

II. THE IDEAL IN THE CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS

I. The Christian Ideal which has been historically given in Christ, as it is to be found in the spiritual consciousness of Christians, is an absolute ideal.

There is nothing higher, nothing so commanding. It is the absolute moral imperative of Christian character. "But if any man," said an apostle, realizing the absolute inward law of the righteousness of Christ, "hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."[1] All that Kant sought to secure for morality in the abstract categorical imperative of the law is won for the Christian consciousness in the living imperative of the Spirit of Christ. This moral absoluteness of the Christian Ideal is not, however, a philosophic distillation of the essence of all morality into some single, general maxim, like Kant's categorical imperative. The Christian law has indeed its unsurpassable golden rule; yet Christian morality is not to be reduced to any general formula of conduct, however excellent; for the Christian law is a living commandment, a law of the Spirit to the spirit of man.[2] As such it has an absolute authority.

This unconditional imperative of the Christian Ideal within the soul manifests itself both in the absolute quality of character which it requires, and the absolute idea of conduct which it introduces. It is an absolute *Be* this, and also an absolute *Do* this.

1. The absolute quality of the Christian Ideal of character is holiness. The Old Testament idea of holiness springs from the conception of a Being who exists apart from the evil and the passion of this world. The Holy One of Israel is the only true God who is separate from the world and its evil, as the gods of the heathen in the popular mythologies had not been kept pure from the passions and the sins of mortals, but had often been conceived of as immersed in the sensuousness of the world, and even bound up in its fate. Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, is the exalted Lord who dwells in the highest heavens,

[1] Rom. viii. 9.

[2] Rom. viii. 2.

self-contained and almighty, perfect and wanting nothing in his own majesty and power. Holiness is the spiritual transcendence of God. It signifies the very godhead of the Deity.

But sacredness, or apartness of life from evil, while it is a primary element of holiness, does not fill out the whole Old Testament conception of the Holy One of Israel. Holiness does not remain a negative and fruitless idea in the religion of Israel, as the abstract idea of a passionless good remained morally inoperative and inert in the philosphy of Greece. The idea of the divine holiness became a purifying and consecrating power in the religious thought and moral conduct of the people of Israel who felt themselves called to be a holy nation, even as the Lord their God was holy.[1] Their thought of holiness was not simply a conception of pure Being dwelling apart in some unapproachable light, but also the consciousness of a present and peculiarly sacred covenant relation of Jehovah with his people, any violation of which on their part was condemned as the sin of national adultery. The holiness of the Lord their God in its revelation to lawgiver and prophet, was a pure will of God to be done on the earth.

2. With this positive conception of holiness at the heart of the true religion there sprang up also the passion for righteousness which flames and glows in the prophets, and which even in its later rigid congealment in Judaism became the moral firmness of the nation.

The absolute moral quality of being, or holiness, requires as its expression, or outward consequence, an absolute moral worthiness in conduct, or righteousness.[2] The word right, in its root idea in the Old Testament, runs back into the idea of physical straightness; to walk in righteousness is to walk in straight paths. Righteousness is moral straightforwardness. Straightness or rightness of conduct implies some rule by which conduct is to be measured; the word righteousness in the Old Testament seems to have contained the moral conception of conformity to some norm; it

[1] Deut. xiv. 2, 21; Lev. xi. 44–45; xvii.–xxvi., — the "Law of Holiness."
[2] See Is. v. 16.

was a forensic term; indeed, in the earlier conception of it righteousness was "not so much a moral quality as a legal status."[1] This rule of righteousness the Hebrew man found in the law of God. Righteousness became synonymous with obedience to the law of the Lord. The conception of this law of righteousness grew more ethical and spiritual in the prophetic consciousness of religion; and we have seen also how it passed in later times into the external and oppressive legalism of the scribes; but the original conception of a law of conduct was not lost; it was cleared of the overgrowth of baneful observances, and thoroughly ethicized, in the Christian Ideal of righteousness.

In the New Testament righteousness is still an absolute law of life; but it is a righteousness whose measure and rule is to be found in no merely external authority and in no maxim of the scribes; its law is inward and spiritual, for it is the righteousness of faith in Christ. The Christian rule of conduct is the perfect Character. The standard of righteousness by which conduct is to be made straight, and in comparison with which conduct shall be finally judged, is the law of the Spirit within the heart. Hence the attainment of Christian righteousness, amid the changeful moral relations of a human life, becomes no more a servile act of obedience as to some foreign rule, but is a free and glad fulfilment of love in the spirit of a son in the Father's house. And there is and can be no higher conception of rightness in all personal relations of men than is given in this Christian idea of righteousness as the fulfilling the ideal law of love, or having in daily life the Spirit of Christ. Thus the idea of righteousness, instead of remaining, as in our moral systems it too often does, a cold, impassive, and hard requirement, which goes against our blood, is itself warmed up, made attractive, and filled with a spiritual light; duty itself in the ethics of Christianity becomes free and hopeful as a gracious act.

The Christian Ideal as absolute, both qualitatively and quantitatively — in spirit and in conduct — as holiness and righteousness — is the Christian law of conscience. The

[1] W. Robertson Smith, *The Prophets of Israel*, p. 72.

moral law in the Christian consciousness is the authority of the Christian ideal-good. As God is the good, realizing in his own fulness of life the moral good, so the divine law is the will in which God's moral being finds expression of its absolute worth. The fullest historic expression of His good will is the life of Jesus Christ. Hence the Christ is revelation also of the law of God. He manifests the law in its spiritual perfection, and consequently his authority is final as the law of the Spirit in the Church of God.

II. The Christian Ideal is extensive over all spheres of activity. It is an ideal coextensive with life.

Man exists in a great variety and complexity of relations, some of them changing, some of them constant: the ideal of man must extend to all these relations, and touch even the temporary and most transitory conditions and moods of his existence. If the moral ideal, which we have chosen, fails to reach any of the actual relations of our life, if it has to be stretched beyond its natural elasticity, or pieced out from other sources, in order that it may be made to extend over some new relation or include special circumstances of our experience, it is so far a defective ideal, and can no longer be regarded as the absolute human ideal of good. Coextension with humanity, and the whole life of humanity, is a necessary condition of the true ideal. That ideal must be adequate, moreover, to the full possibility, to the whole possible development, of the life of humanity. The human ideal must fit life naturally and by virtue of its own elastic correspondence to it, as the atmosphere fits the earth, surrounding every least blade of grass as well as enveloping the Alps, covering all plains, and resting over the ocean's expanse. To discover at any point of life the non-extension of our ideal, would be to prove the ideal deficient. But to find our ideal expanding over life in any larger development of it, availing for every new and intricate social complication of it, is to gain fresh evidence of its divineness. Real life has the right to challenge the ideal of Christianity, and to press all its points of striving and of want upon it, and to ask, Does the ideal of the Christ answer these?

This adequacy of the Christian Ideal to life, it will remain for us to discover and to test in its particulars in our subsequent discussion of practical ethics. At this point we are content to assert its extension as a necessary deduction from its absoluteness, and to affirm its sufficiency for life as a probable consequence of the vital fulness and power of it, which have already been observed in the general description of its contents.

III. The Christian Ideal is comprehensive of all objects and aims that are good.

Its comprehensiveness follows from its extension, yet the one quality is to be distinguished from the other. For the true ideal is not only extensive over every sphere of life, but it will comprehend also all the goods of being. The one absolute good must include all particular and individual goods, or comprehend in its unity the whole kingdom of human worths.

Each sphere of being or kind of activity has its own good or end. There is a good of the senses, a good of each special sense, — beauty for the eye, harmony for the ear, pleasure for the taste, a genial glow of sensation for the comfort of the body. The intellect has its good, corresponding to its rational nature; and there are pleasures of the imagination as well as the "splendid treasures of memory." The heart has its kingdom of satisfactions; and the spirit of man seeks the beatitude, for which it was made, in the vision of God. The true human ideal in its coextension with life, must comprehend these separate goods, and unite in its supreme conception all the worths of life.[1] In this organic comprehension of the ideal, the social wel-

[1] The highest good, as Schleiermacher rightly apprehended it, is the organic connection of all goods, consequently of the whole moral being, under the conception of the highest good. Rothe says: "The highest moral good is not an individual special moral good, but that moral good in which all individual moral goods are included, consequently the organic, united totality of the same." — *Theol. Eth.* § 104, 2. On the contrary, Marheineke maintains that the absolute good is not to be identified with the idea of a highest good to which other goods as lower may be relative: "The absolute good (*Gute*) . . . is the only real; it is not beside or for other goods (*Güter*), as the last indeed, and as the highest, but it is the good (*Gute*) itself," etc. — *Theol. Moral*, ss. 137 ff. But this is an abstraction of the form of the absolute good from its contents. The particular goods of being are the contents which fill up the idea of the good as absolute.

fare, together with individual attainments of good, is to be included. All natural ends of being are to find scope and to be harmonized and justified in it. All arts may contribute to it. The supreme good can exclude only that which is destructive of life, or contradictory of being. Its trueness or holiness requires it to be exclusive of evil as it is inclusive of all good. But for such objects of desire or endeavor which are not in themselves contradictory of the ideal, or unholy, an adequate human ideal must have space and freedom.

To this test of comprehensiveness as well as extension, the Christian Ideal is rightly to be submitted. Any ideals which may be proposed are to be searched and verified by these tests of real life: Do they reach along all lines of activity, and comprise all goods of being? Is the pattern shown on your mount of vision large enough and rich enough to serve as an ideal for the people in the complex relations of society? Let the least child, or the humblest man, or the loftiest and most aspiring spirit feel an impulse, or be capable of a motion, which is left out of our ideal, which cannot find free play and happy adjustment within its lines (so far as that is not an unmoral or destructive impulse), and by that failure to comprehend it, the ideal itself would be condemned, the pattern be proved untrue to life.

The comprehensiveness of the Christian Ideal, together with its extension, follows directly from its absoluteness; yet its claim to these supreme qualities is to be verified in its continuous applications to real life. The conditions now proposed we shall keep in mind throughout our discussions of practical ethics. Ideas and rules of conduct entertained in Christian communities are to be searched under these test questions.

Other ideals or conceptions of the good should be brought to these same ethical requirements; and we proceed next to inquire how far some of the chief moral ideals which are un-Christian in their form, or anti-Christian in their spirit, will conduct themselves when subjected to examination under these tests of extension and comprehension.

III. COMPARISON OF THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL WITH OTHER IDEALS

1. The ideals which may be derived from the classic ethics, when compared with the developed Christian Ideal, will be seen to lack both extension and comprehension. They hold in general very much the same relation to Christian ethics that the religion of Israel sustained to the teaching of Christ — a preparatory, educational relation; but even in the best products of the classic ethics much remains to be fulfilled. Individual utterances of the great ethical teachers of antiquity may be found which rise to noble conceptions of the ends of man's life; and sentiments worthy of the saints may be culled from the writings of the Stoics. Plato dreams of divinest things, and Aristotle sometimes rises above his level of commonplace practical virtue, and speaks for a moment almost like a moral seer. A sentence like this in the Nicomachean ethics lifts us, at once, out of the mundane morality of prudence and temperance into a higher and purer atmosphere: "One ought not, according to the ordinary admonitions, to think as a man because one is a man, or as a mortal because one is mortal; but as far as possible one should make himself immortal, and do all in order to live according to that which is most excellent in him, for although it is little in quantity, yet in power and worth it is far exalted over all things."[1]

We may admit with pleasure and contemplate with satisfaction the skilful portrayal of the happier features of the Roman morals which Mr. Lecky has drawn from many fine passages of antiquity.[2] But Neander reminds us of "the shadowed side which we observe generally in the ancient ethics."[3] Careful historians of morals will not fail to see the sunny side of the classic literature; yet the shadows and the chill of the darker side are known to all thorough students of the ethical conceptions of the ancient world.

[1] *Nic. Ethics*, x. 7. [2] *Hist. of European Morals*, vol. i. pp. 193 sq.
[3] *Wissenschaftlichen Abh.* s. 213.

In general the classic ethics does not escape the limitation of a particularistic and aristocratic conception of the good, and its possible attainment only by the wise or the favored few. There is an unconscious doctrine of election pervading the Greek ethics, which divides the world into Greeks and barbarians, masters and slaves, the wise and the common people. And this natural doctrine of election in the Greek philosophy is far less ethical than the doctrine of election which was proclaimed in the prophetic literature of Israel; for the idea of the divine election in the religion of Israel reached at least towards universalism, and found its fulfilment in a religion for humanity; — it was the election of a holy people for the service of God among the nations, by which all peoples eventually should be blessed; — but the aristocratic doctrine of election in the Greek ethics never overcame its particularism and pride. Zeno's remarkable prediction of the one state might be cited as worthy to be placed beside Isaiah's prophecy of the future universal dominion of the chosen people of God: "All men shall be regarded as members of one people, and fellow-citizens; there shall be one life, and one world, as one flock that shall be led by one common law."[1] But how far that noble Stoic conception of the one world and the one law fell short of the Hebrew-Christian idea of the kingdom of God, may be learned from Plutarch's commentary on it: "What Zeno only saw in a dream, that has Alexander in deed accomplished."[2] As Neander has observed, Zeno could not show how a thought such as he had uttered could be wrought out; and the community which he would bring about, would prove to be the dissolution, not the fulfilment, of the particular orderings of nature and the proper distinctions between men. Humanity was to be melted together in one mass, not developed into one manifold organism. One Rome over all the world, not one kingdom of the Spirit among all races and tribes, is the best dream of antiquity. When brought to the test of universal extension, and the comprehension of

[1] Plutarch, *de fort. Alex.* 6. See Neander, *Wissenschaftlichen Abh.* s. 152.
[2] *Ibid.* s. 153.

all national elements and individualities, the classic idea of one empire is found wanting.

We may recall the saying of Epictetus that one should not regard himself "as a citizen of Athens or Corinth, but of the world" (*Diss.* i. 9. 1); but the "citizen of the world" of the later Stoicism was like "the man without a country."

Greek ethics fails also to recognize the full scope of the life of humanity. Plato put his ideal into the dream of a republic; and the sphere for the exercise of virtue and the attainment of good in the Aristotelian ethics is still the state. He knows no other or larger opportunity for life than that furnished in his conception of the civic body. Plato indeed brought to his conception of the ideal republic some transcendental ideas of the highest good which exceed the political form in which antiquity could conceive of its realization; but Aristotle's ethics are thoroughly political and mundane. The kingdom of humanity into which all the nations shall bring their glory and honor, is an inspired idea beyond the habit of mind of the great masters of political ethics in antiquity.

To this lack of extension in the ideal, in consequence of which it failed to compass the whole range of human life and possibility, may be traced another marked deficiency of the Aristotelian ethics, — its want of aspiration. The good man is he who meets wisely the existing conditions of life. There is a want of ideality throughout the Nicomachean ethics; there is little that is aspirant and idealizing in these well-rounded classical lines, nothing Gothic in the architecture of the Greek ethics. It is mundane morality.

The one-sided intellectualism of the Platonic ethics was recognized by Aristotle; yet the lack in motive-power of the Platonic intellectualism was not overcome in Aristotle's theory of the virtues. The old question which Aristotle raised was really left without answer even by the most practical moral philosopher of the Greeks: "We say it is necessary for those who act justly themselves to become just; and for those who act wisely themselves to be wise; for if they do just and wise things, already are they just

and wise."[1] How to pass from unjust and unwise to right doing was the moral problem which the Greek philosophy did not solve, and which the Christian teaching of the new birth of the Spirit only is sufficient to determine.

Epictetus discovered this weak spot in the moral philosophy of his age, and exposed it with unsparing ridicule. "Surely," he said, "virtue does not consist in understanding Chrysippus; if it does, then improvement is confessedly nothing else than understanding a good deal of Chrysippus" (*Diss.* i. 4. 2). Epictetus found a method of virtue in the Stoic law of nature enforced by religious emotion: he would say, "Are not we relations of God?" (*Diss.* i. 9. 3): "We are God's athletes." (See Dr. Hatch's rendering, *Hibbert Lectures*, 1888, p. 155.)

From the want of extension in the classic ideal there follows also its failure to comprehend several spheres of life and kinds of virtue in its conception of the ethical ends of being; such as freedom for every individual, industrial independence, the brotherhood of men, and the perfect fruits of charity. The lofty and pure height of virtue which can be reached only by the arduous path of self-denying love lay beyond the horizon of its vision. Liberality indeed was a much lauded virtue among the ancients; but the liberality which Aristotle praises does not approach the love which reigns from the cross. A recent writer has noted the contrast between Aristotle's magnanimous man and the virtuous man of that Christian instructor, Clement of Alexandria, who was not unfamiliar with the best wisdom of the Greek philosophy.[2] The general limitations which we have been observing in the Grecian ideal of the good man appear with concrete distinctness when we bring the ideal magnanimous man of the Nicomachean ethics not merely into comparison with the compendium of honorable conduct which one of the early church fathers had learned in the school of Christianity,[3] but immediately before the character which irradiates the gospel of the Son of man.

Dr. Hatch justly recognizes the "moral reformation within the philosophical sphere of the later Stoicism," and also the expansion of moral

[1] *Nic. Ethics*, lib. 2, cap. 4. See Neander, *opus cit.*, for a thorough discussion of this point.

[2] Luthardt, *Gesch. der Ch. Eth.* vol. i, s. 137.

[3] Clement, *Pæd.* iii.; cf. *Nic. Ethics*, iv. 3.

motive from its profound religious conception (*opus cit.* pp. 142 sq.). Still even this reformatory movement of the later Greek ethics, which culminated in the writings of Epictetus, fell short of the Christian idea of life, and could not by its own momentum escape the limitations of the whole classic conception of man. Compare Christ's saying that "the Son of man came eating and drinking" (Matt. xi. 19), with the description which Epictetus gives of the messenger of God: "Take notice of me that I am without a country, without a house, without an estate, without a servant; I lie on the ground, having no wife, no children, no coat, but only earth and heaven, and one sorry cloke" (*Diss.* iii. 22. 5).

The want of extension of the classic ideal on the religious side, and its consequent failure to comprehend the spheres of good which are opened to the spiritual pursuit of man's highest aims, may be chargeable not so much to the moral as to the religious immaturity of the Grecian world. Yet the mediæval endeavor to superinduce the religious ideal upon the Aristotelian ethics discloses not only the clumsiness of the schoolmen, but still more the lack of breadth in the original classic ideal itself. Its ethical basis is not broad enough for the subsequent religious superstructure. A moral ideal which was not coextensive with the whole spiritual nature of man was taken by the schoolmen from the Aristotelian ethics, and then the so-called religious virtues were more or less cumbrously and precariously built upon it. Supernaturalism in morals was added to the classic naturalism as a divine appendix to ethics. But Christianity cannot consent to be regarded as an appendix to nature, nor is divine grace an afterthought of the Creator. In the mediæval endeavor to make the Aristotelian ethics answer for the Catholic virtues, a false separation was introduced in ethics between moral works and works of supererogation. The so-called evangelical counsels, or gracious admonitions to more than is commanded, were added as a superlative morality to which the common people are not called or chosen.[1] But our ethical ideal, as we have already urged, must be coextensive with all human activities and inclusive of all duties, or it must give place to another. If it be conditioned by some virtue which is higher and independent of it, it ceases to be

[1] The relative truth in the "evangelical counsels" is defined later.

an absolute ideal. The Christian Ideal affirms its own absoluteness in the simple command, Be perfect: in all relations, under all conditions, and for all ends, or conceivable goods of existence, Be perfect. To be perfect is to live in right relations always and universally. Hence there cannot be a superior and exclusive kind of perfection possible only to the few. The Sabbath was made for man; that which is sacred is for all men, their common obligation; the Christian absolute is a universal virtue.

2. Comparative ethics would require a careful inquiry concerning the resemblances and the contrasts to be observed between the Christian Ideal and the conceptions of the highest good which have obtained in the religions of the East. The full treatment of this subject belongs in this series of text-books to the department of comparative religion; the limits of our space permit us to note simply the following points of ethical comparison between the Buddhistic and the Christian conception of the chief end of human life: —

(1) The supreme ethical word of Buddhism is renunciation; the supreme word of Christianity is consecration. "Having abandoned these things, without adopting others, let man, calm and independent, not desire existence:" — such is the counsel of Buddhism.[1] "Consecrate them in the truth: thy word is truth:"[2] — this is the prayer of the Master for his disciples. Not merely renunciation of life, but rather the consecration of it, is the rich Christian word.

(2) In this fundamental contrast there is involved also the difference between a comparatively negative and a positive relation of the mind to truth. Christianity is a supernal faith in truth: "To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice:"[3] — such is the divine Master's loyalty to truth in the hour of his self-sacrifice. "The Brâhma*n*a for whom 'equal' and 'unequal' do not exist, would he

[1] *Sutta-nipâta*, v. 839. See Kuenen, *National Religions*, p. 300.
[2] John xvii. 17.
[3] John xviii. 37.

say, 'This is true'? Or with whom should he dispute, saying, 'This is false'? With whom should he enter into dispute?"[1] — such is the philosophic surrender of the truth by the Buddha on the way to Nirvâ*n*a. Christianity is one superlative assertion of truth; "Buddhism raises the rejection of every affirmation to the rank of a principle."[2]

(3) This negative rather than positive relation of mind to truth shows itself in a further ethical contrast in the conception of salvation. The effort of Buddhism is justly described as an effort "not to convert, but to rescue." Life is to be saved from desire and delusion, even though such salvation ends in annihilation of the will to live. Christianity seeks to convert; and the task of rescuing from evil is only a part — the first and lower part — of its work of conversion from death unto life. The entire positive contents of the idea of salvation which we have found in Jesus' words concerning eternal life, are wanting in the Buddhistic doctrine of Nirvâ*n*a.[3] The contrast is profound between the Christian idea of life as fulness of eternal good, and the prevailing thought in Buddhism of escape from suffering through the extinction, at least, of all desire of life. The determinative idea of salvation through deprivation naturally ended, if it did not begin, in the thought of the highest good as the rest of an eternal death. Christianity in its final hope proclaims eternal life; Buddhism in its final hope points to personal extinction.[4]

[1] *Sutta-nipâta*, v. 843.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 302. "Naturally this, like all other quietism, has its limits": as mere scepticism ultimately must affirm its principle of denial.

[3] Max Müller thinks that in the conception of Nirvâ*n*a, although not generally, the earlier teaching of Buddha is to be distinguished from the later philosophical dogma of annihilation. — *Science of Religion*, pp. 138 sq. Passages may be quoted from the canonical literature of Buddhism to show that the word Nirvâ*n*a sometimes meant extinction of all desire, or absolute peace, and not necessarily annihilation of being; but the existence, and hence the possibility of a continued existence of the individual soul, was not one of the affirmations of Buddhism. Perhaps the truth concerning the different conceptions, which are contained in the word Nirvâ*n*a, is hit in the opinion of Professor De La Saussaye (*Science of Religion*, p. 601), that official Buddhism hesitated to choose between the ideas of Nirvâ*n*a as extinction of being or cessation of suffering.

[4] For example, in the Buddhist book entitled *The Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness*, we read: "Immovable is the emancipation of my heart. This is my last existence. There will now be no re-birth for me. Thus spake the Blessed One." — *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xi. p. 153.

This difference in the conception of the supreme good as the completion or extinction of life, appears also in the contrast between the comfort of the gospel for the sorrowing, and the only solace which Buddhism had to offer to these who mourn. In the legends of Buddha he seeks to console the mother who had lost her child by bidding her go to all other homes, and learn that each has its own sorrow, and that there are many more dead than living. Jesus comforted the sisters at Bethany by going in the power of the living God to the tomb, and proclaiming the resurrection and the life.

(4) The difference between the quietism of Buddhism and the positivism of the Christian doctrine of eternal life determines a still further contrast in the entire conception of morality. The wisdom and virtue of many precepts of the Buddhistic ethics, the beauty of many sayings, should not be overlooked; but in the midst of many striking resemblances the contrast also appears between the whole Buddhistic and Christian conception of morality. In the former the moral life is a means to an end which is not ethically conceived as ultimately fulness of good, but rather metaphysically determined as a resolution of all desire and conscious personality into Nirvâ*n*a, — the final lapse of life beyond rebirth into the passionless all of existence; while in Christianity the moral is not only a means towards an end, but virtue itself is part and essence of the final ideal to be attained. Morality, in the Christian conception, is not only a way towards the goal of existence; it is also good to be reached in the goal of life.[1]

This radical difference between the ethics of Buddhism and of Christianity as a whole appears clearly when we compare the rise and place of monasticism in Christian history with the asceticism of Buddhism.[2] Monasticism

[1] De La Saussaye hardly expresses this radical defect in the whole ethical conception of Buddhism too strongly, when he remarks: "As Buddhism almost always gives prohibitions and not commands, morality for a real saint or a monk is purely negative; all doing is a bondage from which he is free; the more he resembles a dead being, the higher he has risen" (*Science of Religion*, p. 606).

[2] Kuenen has emphasized this difference in his *National Religions*, pp. 304-

existed in Buddhism from the first, and was constitutive of it; in Christianity it appeared later on, and as one tendency of many in the development of the Church. "There could be no Buddhism without 'bhikshus' — there is a Christianity without monks."[1] Buddhism has no conception of the kingdom of God into which is to be brought all the honor and the glory of the nations.

3. By means of these same tests of extension and comprehension which are given in the absoluteness of the Christian Ideal, we may judge and correct modern ideals which have grown up partly under the influence of Christian ideas, and partly without the pale of acknowledged Christianity.

(1) Among these modern forms which the ideal of life has assumed, may be mentioned, first, the æsthetic ideal, as it took shape and color in literature in the writings of Schiller, or as it has appeared (not without other Hebrew elements) in the revived Hellenism of Matthew Arnold.

In this conception beauty and goodness ultimately coincide. Good morals are good taste. The true life is the beautiful life, and conversely a beautiful life will become a true life.

The truth in this æsthetic ideal we should be the last to question in the interest of Christian morality. The life of the Son of man was the life of simple naturalness and of perfect spiritual beauty. The Christ did not fail to notice the lilies of the field, the birds of the air, and the vine by the door. Nature to his eye was one symbolism of the kingdom of heaven. Nor does the Christian beatitude fail to include the idea which possessed Schiller of a state of æsthetic perfection beyond the present dynamic moral state, as he regarded it, or existing condition of inharmonious conflict, — the play, greatly to be desired, of a harmonious and beautiful life above the necessity of moral endeavor and strife.[2] Neither in Christian mor-

311. After pointing out the evident resemblance, he says that "it is at this very point that the deeper, nay, the fundamental, difference between the two religions is revealed." [1] *Ibid.* p. 306.

[2] "Man is only entirely man when he plays": this paradox Schiller explains at length in his Letters on *Æsthetic Education* (No. 15). In the closing

als should the intimate and natural relationship be denied between the beautiful and the good; we may readily grant the assertion that the step from the æsthetic to the moral is much easier than the step from the physical to the moral. We feel instinctively that one ought to rise naturally and easily from a life in love with beauty to a life at one with goodness. We feel a painful contradiction between a high æsthetic development and a life of moral turpitude. Art ought to be sinless. Nor should the moral geniality, the happy naturalness and freshness of feeling, and the fine responsiveness of spirit to the world without, which belong to the æsthetic ideal of life, be lightly valued. A true conception of life must reach in its extension to the ideal ends of grace which Schiller sought to attain; and it should include in its summation of the good those elements of beauty and of joy which light up the morals of æstheticism, — the laughter and the song of the sunny life of that ancient world which has passed away.

But the æsthetic ideal is inadequate to life when taken by itself, and without further extension and profounder comprehension of the problem of good and evil than Schiller gave to it in his letters on æsthetic education, or than Matthew Arnold has reached even in his revived Hellenism, with its infusion of Hebrew righteousness. For the moral equation is not exhausted in terms of the beautiful. The good equals the beautiful, and something more; the moral problem is not solved by the identification of these two terms. Our moral ideal must reach to the bottom of the deadly fact of moral evil, and prove equal to the historic problem of suffering and sin. A picture of an angel, however radiantly beautiful, does not present a working model for a being who is under the dominion of moral evil. His ethical conception of life must reach to the depths of his actual misery as well as extend to the skies. His idea of perfect virtue, and the life made beautiful, must take account of the present facts

letter he distinguished between the dynamical state of rights, the ethical state of duties, and the æsthetic state, in which is the fulfilment of good. The idea of beauty Schiller exalts as an idea of the reason, a transcendental idea.

of his moral humiliation, and comprehend the processes by which the evil may be cast out and whatsoever things are lovely be restored. The true *human* ideal is the ideal not of a pure angel, but of a sinner made angelic, of a broken man delivered from the bondage of the flesh, of a fallen being restored and exalted to the security of the upright and harmonious life.

Owing to its want of extension towards the darker side and altogether unæsthetic aspect of human existence, the romantic ideal, and to some extent the literary ideals of many writers, fail to do justice to certain necessary forms of human virtue, and are therefore proved defective also by our second test of comprehension of good. Grant that Puritanism was unæsthetic; that Calvinism has been a stern teacher of duty; that Oliver Cromwell did not hew to a line of beauty; that the early type of religious faith in New England lacked color, warmth, and grace. Yet an ideal which should have no room in it for the militant virtues, and which should lay aside the strength of Puritanism, would fail of historic comprehension. Calvinism has much to answer for on the æsthetic score; Puritanism has followed the arduous path of duty without looking to either side, and noticing how fair are the fields, and how full of color and song the nature which God has filled to overflowing with the joy of life. Admit that Puritanism wore needless blinders, — it went straight on and carried man's burden; it lifted by main strength the whole world to a higher order, and opened a purer and grander prospect for humanity. Grant that the true ideal should include the æsthetic, extend to the least flower, and own the simplest joy of nature; it should not, therefore, exclude the awe of the Calvinistic conception of the divine sovereignty, and the power of that tremendous sense of man's responsibility which Puritanism succeeded in maintaining. The iron need not be taken from the blood, nor the commanding vision of righteousness from the soul, when the touch becomes fine, the heart tender, and the eye sunny, in the world of beauty, light, and love.

Schiller's ideal of a life formed under the influence of

the beautiful receives something of this needed tonic of righteousness, it is true, in Matthew Arnold's Hebraized Hellenism; yet his idea of conduct touched by a sense of some power not ourselves, which makes for righteousness, and pervaded with sweetness and light, needs itself to strike deeper root into the sources of the Old Testament righteousness; it should draw its happy reasonableness of virtue from a more intimate and abiding knowledge of the Father, in doing whose will the strong Son of God found his life filled with a sweetness and light such as has never been manifested in the whole kingdom of Hellenism, ancient or modern, such as can be known only to the children of heaven.

(2) The Evolutionary Ideal.

Without repeating the ethical criticism to which in other relations this ideal renders itself liable (pp. 84 sq.), we insist at this point that it should be subjected rigorously to those moral tests to which we shall endeavor to bring the Christian Ideal throughout our subsequent discussions of the virtues, duties, and motives of life; namely, the severe tests of moral extension, comprehension, and absoluteness.

The evolutionary ethics claims to cover the present facts of life, both individual and social; it will not presume to extend into the unknown regions of the hereafter, or to determine the possibilities of the spirit. It has an eye single to human welfare in the progressive development of the human good on this earth. It builds no watch-tower for observations in moral astronomy. The heavens must remain unknown. But whatever may be our knowledge or our ignorance of them, nevertheless the heavens belong to the environment of the earth. The unknown power to which Mr. Spencer reduces the ultimate causation of phenomena, is the formative and efficient energy of life throughout all its phenomena. Known or unknown, it is power to be reckoned with in our moral dynamics. Even though this ultimate force be a mystery, it is the one universal power with which we have to do. Some determination, therefore, of our relation to it, and some practical reckoning with it in our conduct, must belong to

the moral history and the moral stability of this life. I am utterly ignorant of the nature of gravitation; but to the law of gravitation I must conform in every physical action. I may know nothing of the "divinity that shapes our ends"; but to the law of the ultimate Force, the Unknown Power, the God over all, I must learn in all my actions, and in every vital breath, to conform, if I am to preserve my moral equilibrium, and to live a happy life. So that the whole range and significance of those ethical elements which belong to man's spiritual nature and environment cannot be ruled out, and counted as though they were nothing, by the mere assertion that they transcend moral experience and belong to the unrevealed mystery of life. Known or unknown, revealed or unrevealed, they have relations to conduct; these powers of the world to come touch on all sides our moral consciousness; they shape our thoughts and dreams of our ideal ends of being. Morals must at the very least be left open towards this higher side of human possibility, and a science which would close the circle without inclusion of this larger prospect will possess but a limited and confined sphere of good.

Positivism has indeed sought to keep the circle open on the upper circumference of human nature, and to commend this larger good, in its religion of humanity. How far positivism has succeeded in its endeavor to create for itself a religion, after having devoured all religions before it (like the lean kine in Pharaoh's dream), is a question which belongs rather to the study of comparative religion than to a treatise on ethics; our present contention is that the scientific conception of the good cannot, without limitation and want of moral comprehension, be finished and closed up in terms of present welfare, as writers like Mr. Stephen would define it exclusively in the goods of present life; in other words, to be extensively and comprehensively ethical, and with an absolute righteousness, the scientific induction of virtue must be left wide open on the spiritual side, and its insufficiency be confessed to include in itself the whole ideal of man's being and destiny.

The scope of this general criticism of the evolutionary ideal, pure and simple, unsupplemented by the deductions of a spiritual psychology, and not expanded in the light of the life of the Christ, will appear further on in our more particular consideration of the relations and range of almost every virtue and duty of life.

(3) Modern Socialistic Ideals.

These are not by any means necessarily unchristian; often they are advanced as ideals directly in the line of the true Christian idea of society. For convenience, and in order that we may avoid repetition, we reserve discussion of these ideals to a later chapter; we observe in passing that under the tests which we are applying they must be judged by their competency or their failure to meet the requirements of life in all directions, and to do justice to the several elements which are to be harmonized in the ultimate good of human life.[1]

In this chapter we have considered the Christian Ideal in its primary historical revelation, and have determined its general characteristics in the Christian consciousness of it; we have also briefly compared other ideals with it, and seen at a glance its superior comprehensiveness.

The contents of this Christian Ideal, so far as they have been realized in Christian experience, or may now be apprehended in our efforts to reach after "better things, and the things that accompany salvation"[2] will appear more concretely, as we shall proceed to treat in detail of the Christian virtues and duties. In accordance with these general characteristics of the true ideal — its moral absoluteness, or holiness; its extension, or adequacy to life; and its comprehension, or inclusion of all goods — our Christian determinations of character and standards of conduct are to be formed and judged.

[1] Mr. Mackenzie discriminates three elements which should be recognized and harmonized in the social ideal: "(1) individual culture, (2) the conquest of nature, and (3) right social relations" (*Introduction to Social Philosophy*, p. 241). The organic ideal "must include such a degree of freedom as is necessary for the working out of the individual life. It must include such a degree of socialism as is necessary to prevent exploitation and a brutalizing struggle for existence, as well as to secure to each individual such leisure as is required for the development of the higher life. It must include such a degree of aristocratic rule as is necessary for the advance of culture and for the wise conduct of social affairs" (p. 293). To these elements he adds a fourth, "the principle which is necessary to combine them." This principle he finds in "the recognition of vital relationships," or, "Fraternity." Christian ethics has in its supreme virtue of love the organizing principle of the elements of the social ideal, and without this principle the new social order cannot be formed out of the social orders which are passing away.

[2] Heb. vi. 9.

Before we are ready, however, to proceed farther in this direction, we must study, in the proper historical method of Christian ethics, the process through which the moral ideal comes to realization among men; we should seek to understand the successive epochs as well as the modes and conditions of its progress in the world; in short, we must consider the facts and laws of the progressive realization on earth of the kingdom of the Christian Ideal — the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER III

THE REALIZATION OF THE MORAL IDEAL

THE Christian Ideal, which was revealed in Christ, and which is taught by his Spirit among men, has not yet been fully realized in the life of humanity, nor is it perfectly reflected even in the best Christian consciousness of any age. The Spirit still convinces the world of sin. The kingdom of organized love has been begun on earth, but it is far from completion. The Christian Ideal of life is a reality among men, but not a finished reality. The whole common life of humanity has not yet become the communion of the Holy Ghost.

There is to be followed in history a moral process continued in moral freedom, through which the good finds progressive fulfilment, and the moral ideal comes with the increasing purpose of the ages to realization. History is no accidental congeries of events, no heap of circumstances raised and scattered by the winds; human history betrays the signs of a moral order, and a moral progress. History in its profoundest significance is a moral and spiritual movement towards the ideal or the highest good.[1]

We have already indicated in the introduction (p. 27 sq.) the conditions, or postulates, which are necessary to this process of life towards a moral end. We proceed now to trace historically the successive steps of this moral process through which the ideal draws towards its realization in the history of mankind. We must seek to discover the principle or law of the moral life which corresponds to each of these main epochs of moral development. We shall need to inquire also into the moral methods by means

[1] See the author's *Old Faiths in New Light*, ch. ii.

of which the moral movement of history has been carried forward; and then we shall be prepared for the further inquiry (which should be considered before we can pass to an intelligent discussion of Christian virtues and duties), to what extent in existing types of character and institutions of society the Christian Ideal may be regarded as having already been brought to pass, and made a visible kingdom of good on earth; and further in what respects the ideal is to be apprehended by us as a book of unfulfilled Christian prophecy.

We shall accordingly discuss, first, the epochs and corresponding principles of the moral process in history.

Ethics implies relations; moral law is law for a being in certain relations. Ethics involves, on the one hand, a sentiency of a peculiar kind (however philosophers may define it), which we discriminate as moral feeling; and on the other hand, certain acts to be done, truths to be owned, and good to be desired, which impress themselves upon our moral sentiency, and which, as we perceive them, assume an authority over us which we call the reign of conscience. Even though the real objectivity of such ethical worths should be denied, still, all moralists must lend to them a certain mental objectivity; for the ethical state consists in a distinctive quality of consciousness, — a recognition of self as under law, a consciousness of self as both free and at the same time under authority. An infinite being might be conceived as having no relation except to himself, as being both subject and object to himself, and that ethically as well as metaphysically. So God may be said to have moral life in himself. But a finite being lives in all the extent and range of his existence in relation to some environment, and the kind of life, whether physical or higher life, is determined in relation to the nature of the environment to which the life responds, in which one has his being. Our natural ethical consciousness, like our sense of physical existence, is a responsiveness of our being — a responsiveness of which our being is made capable in the higher as well as lower directions, — to our human environment: a response in the one direction to the pres-

ence of outward nature, and a response in the higher direction to the moral and spiritual order in which we also live and move and have our being. Hence the moral sphere and its law wears always an aspect of objectivity to the thoughts of man's heart; and, despite all the philosophers, continues thus to be objective to the common moral sense of mankind. We grow to consciousness of ourselves as under law, not as law to ourselves.

But this is the moral consciousness in its objectivity as we now realize it; what was it in its primitive state, in the early awakening of it in some prehistoric man? Looking back over the moral process (so far as it is historic) we observe that the development has advanced on two related lines; the evolution of morals has not been simple but dual. Both the moral environment has been advanced, and the moral sentiency has been intensified. There may be an increase of the moral materials for life, and an enhancement, also, of the human power to appropriate those materials. To each stage in the development of the moral environment there corresponds an adaptation or advancement of the living principle of moral appropriation in the subject. So that the successive stages of moral growth, the great epochs of human progress in ethical life, are to be studied in this double aspect of them, — first, we are to survey the moral environment, to take into account the outward conditions, the degree of light or moral revelation, the materials of moral judgment and motive, which are objectively given in an age; and secondly, the appropriating principle, or the special moral adaptation of the subject to the ethical conditions of his time.

I. THE PREHISTORIC STAGE OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

The beginnings of life, as well as the ends of being, are beyond knowledge. There can be no positive science of prehistoric man. There is frequent need of reminding scientific as well as theological speculators of Aristotle's observation that we know only the middle, not the beginnings or the ends of things. We may easily fall prey to a

scientific or a theological dogmatism concerning the prehistoric conditions of things human; Darwinism no less than Calvinism may be tempted by a theory of man's first estate. The fabled first man may have been more or less richly endowed with intellect and moral sense; he may have been more like the beasts that perish, or more like an angel of God, than our science or our theology has conjectured; what we know with positiveness is the fact that man, so early as we can follow his track on the earth, was a moral agent; and so soon as man was able to make for himself a history he began to make for himself a moral record. What we know of the historic ethical consciousness compels us to assume that there must have been from the beginning of man's life on earth an ethical potency and promise for such moral life as we find to have been actually achieved in his history. We must assume in the earliest and most nebulous beginnings of human life a minimum of moral capacity, which was large enough, and distinctively moral enough, to afford a sufficient start and momentum for the subsequent evolution of which we have knowledge in history. Anything less than this would leave the moral history of the world without rational beginning or intelligent explanation. The first moral root in the soil of nature must have been quickened with the same kind of life that has grown out of nature into the fruitfulness of the world's ethics. There must be morality enough grounded and rooted in nature for the moral consciousness which has risen above nature. There must have been from the beginning enough ethical and spiritual supernaturalness involved in nature to render intelligible to us the moral and religious supernaturalism which in the course of nature has brought forth the fruits of the spirit.

1. We assume, therefore, the existence, in the dim beginnings, of some manlike being who had been born into moral capacity for life. At some point evolution had received, when all things were ready, the fire of the spirit, and moral life flamed into self-consciousness. How such a being, capable of beginning a moral history, was fash-

ioned, or when, may be a question of scientific imagination or of theological concern; but it is immaterial from the ethical point of view. The fact of a real moral start, in a being capable of moral life and growth, is for ethics the material fact. Adam may remain for us a general type of man in the beginning of his moral existence. According to Genesis that earliest moral stage, that first chapter in man's moral history, is to be conceived of as a state alike of moral innocence, immaturity, and instability. The capacity for moral life had been reached, but a real righteousness (as Augustine would say) remained to be realized in the drama of man's temptation, fall, and recovery from sin.

It should not be forgotten, however, how little is made of Adam in the rest of the Bible; only a very few allusions to Adam's fall occur in all the succeeding books of the Bible. Jesus never seems to have mentioned him in his teaching. Paul draws a contrast between the old and the new man, the earthly and the spiritual, by a reference to the first chapters of Genesis. The prehistoric moral man possesses little ethical interest except as a postulate or necessary beginning for moral history.

This stage of moral beginnings we must conceive of as a condition in which the possibility of evil is left open. Moral capacity, together with moral immaturity, is all that we need postulate in order to render the entrance of law and the beginning of sin conceivable.

The possibility of evil lies open in any moral beginning which we can conceive. For a moral beginning is a transcendence of the necessity of natural order. Moral freedom is within finite limits a delegation to created being of something of God's power to have life in Himself. A life which is thus divine in its essence, although finite in its range, may be a gift of the Creator beyond recall. Moral creation is in a sense a self-limitation of the Creator. Once having trusted nature with this divine gift of self-conscious will, the faithful Creator will keep his trust. Moral personality may fall from its idea, may alienate itself from its source, may possibly sink even in self-degradation beneath the level of conscious intelligence, becoming dead in sin; but it is not a gift of life to be annihilated by a fiat of omnipotence, or to be put back at God's will into its unmoral pre-

existence. And if this gift of eternal life in a moral creation be worth the giving; if it must be given in order that creative love may impart itself to the utmost, then the risk of its loss, the possibility of a perversion of it for a whole world-age, and the cost of its future redemption, are not to be counted in the balance. Love can risk much in giving all, and in its consciousness of power to redeem the lost by still loving it. Divine love quickens nature with Spirit, and in the living soul gives of itself to the utmost because it is love, and love to be love must give all; evil, therefore, with its possibilities of woes, cannot prevent love's supreme gift to another of moral being like itself, although evil may require the cost of the divinest sacrificial sorrow of the same love for the recovery of its best gift to nature.

The highest good of a moral creation cannot, as is obvious from its nature, be gained through an act of the divine power; it must be won, if at all, as the result of a moral history and on the plain of freedom. To create at once, as it were off-hand, a realized moral good, does not lie within the compass of power. Hence the possibility of evil must be admitted as inherent in the nature of the moral gift, and the liability to sin is involved in the capacity for virtue.[1]

Evil, the possibility of which must be thus admitted as belonging to the prehistoric stage of human life, may be more than a necessary incident to man's moral history. It may become indirectly, yet none the less truly, a possibility

[1] So true is this that Mr. Stephen, writing a natural history of ethics, goes so far as to suggest that pain may always be necessary as a condition of progress: "I can at least see no reason for supposing that it (progress) implies the extirpation of evil in general, or the definitive substitution of harmony for discord." — *Science of Ethics*, p. 445. But he overlooks the fact that a possibility of evil which at first may lie open in the nature of moral freedom may in time be closed by the development of that freedom; that the finite will, choosing the good, may eventually itself shut the door to evil which creative power left open for freedom; that while a certain metaphysical possibility of evil may always be supposed to lie inherent in the nature of virtue, and to belong to the moral perfection of Deity, nevertheless, that possibility of sin may become morally excluded, practically, effectually closed, in the course of the moral life of a finite being. Thus in the Deity itself what may be conceived to be a metaphysical possibility of evil may at the same time be eternally a moral impossibility of evil.

of a larger realization of good, a way towards the highest conceivable consummation of good in a moral creation. The ideal of perfect being in a perfect life may be attained either directly through a freedom manifesting itself in obedience, and confirming itself in righteousness; or indirectly, and on a longer, harder, yet no less sure way towards the goal, by a fall, through the conflict of ages, and in the final exclusion of evil by means of suffering under the law of the cross.

Evil may be the longer way to the creature's good — a way of suffering and through death; yet it may prove only another way towards the same divine goal of the creation, and a way moreover through sacrificial ages to richer realization of good for the universe as a whole.

If we take the biblical account of Adam as an ethically natural account of the moral beginnings of life, the fall of man may be regarded as both a loss and a gain. It was a fall from innocence into sin, and as such it was loss and subjection to the pain of death. But it was also the beginning of a moral conflict whose end in the love of God is victory. The descent into the power of evil and the shadow of death also becomes, according to God's promise, an advance towards the righteousness which shall be revealed in the light of redemption. The step down is a step on a way which runs forward, although through darkness and death. The earthly paradise is lost, but the heavenly may be gained. Thus from the moral beginnings of creation the possibility of evil, which is inherent in man's freedom, is taken up into the possibility of good, which is eternal in the divine love.

The further development of this thought belongs to theodicy. The moral justification of a creation with the possibility of evil can be conceived by us in the further possibility of the overcoming of its evil by the good which is given in the same creative idea and purpose. Only when redemption is thus regarded as itself an element in the divine idea of creation, when creation and redemption are regarded as coëxisting, coëternal, as one thought in the mind of God, can we seem to gain a theodicy which shall comprehend the fall and the ages of death. Atonement in the divine idea is as eternal as creation: "The Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. xiii. 8).

Following the biblical account, we may form some rational conjecture concerning the moral environment, as we have called it, of the primitive man. We may conceive with some probability what the moral conditions, or materials for moral life, may have been in its earliest distinct beginnings. At this epoch man has emerged from animalism. Adam gives names to all creatures brought to him.[1] The primitive man shows his divine call to master the universe by giving names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field. Language is man's mastery of things. In this free intelligence over all things, the process of creative evolution has gained the point where some sense also of moral relations can be attained. We may suppose the moral environment, at this primitive stage of the process, to have been at its simplest, and in its most general form. Something begins to impress itself upon the awakening consciousness as the right kind of life. There is a presence and pressure of something independent of the will, existing above the will, and for it, which begins to make itself felt in the primitive human consciousness.[2]

2. What, then, is the principle of appropriation, corresponding to this primitive moral environment?

We may seek for this earliest principle of moral appropriation, or first power of moral receptivity, in two ways, along two lines of investigation: historically in the traces and signs of it to be found in the consciousness of primitive peoples; or embryologically, so far as we can trace back through its development to its simplest beginnings, the mature moral consciousness of men.

(1) On the first line of investigation we reach, as the elementary principle of moral consciousness, some simple moral feeling, — a mere moral sensation we might call it, — which implies, however, some rudimentary moral perception. It contains a primitive moral perception. This may be vague, indeterminate, fluctuating. But it is real. Some feeling of right, involving more or less defi-

[1] Gen. ii. 19–20.

[2] Gen. ii. 16: "And the Lord God commanded the man"; but He *brought* the animals to him (v. 19). Man becomes conscious of himself as under a commanding authority.

nite or crude perceptions of what is right or wrong, exists in savage tribes, and may be traced among the earliest records of the primitive ages. There was a primitive and unformed moral feeling-perception at the beginnings of the historic evolution of human consciousness.[1]

(2) On the other line of inquiry we reach the same result. The child's consciousness of right and wrong, as we may observe the earliest motions of it, is an unformed moral feeling which gradually resolves itself into distinct moral perceptions. And these first moral perceptions in the life of the child are given in its recognition of the vital relationships into which it has been born: slowly the child's consciousness of these personal relations develops into ideas of what is due each, and of the right adjustment of its actions to these personal relations. Morals, for the child, begin in its learning to move in happy harmony with its personal surroundings, very much as learning to walk physically consists in the sense and mastery of the outward relations of the feet and the floor. In such acquisition of knowledge of the right relations of life — in what might be called the sense of happy human equilibrium — we come to our moral consciousness of life. Hence we can understand the fact, which is emphasized by the natural historians of the rise of conscience in man, that the beginnings of morality to be observed among primitive tribes, are social beginnings;[2] the emergence of the moral sense is coincident with the appearance of the tribal sense, and is involved in a perception of what is necessary to some social order. The moral sense in its rise into human consciousness is a communal sense. In recognizing this fact we do not jump however to the further conclusion that the two are identical — the moral sense and the sense of social relations; the two are wrapped up together, and some communal sense seems always to have accompanied the rise of the moral sense. But the moral judgment contains an additional element, which it

[1] For fuller argument of this position I must refer to my *Religious Feeling*, chs. iii. iv.

[2] This characterizes also such anticipation of morals as may be traced among gregarious animals in what Mr. Spencer calls "subhuman justice."

brings to the perception of an action needed for the preservation of the family or tribe, — the idea, namely, that in the communal necessity there lies also a human obligation; that men *ought* so to live and work together; that the common need involves a moral order of existence. There lies herein a qualitative judgment as well as a quantitative measurement of social interest.

This fundamental difference between the quantitative calculation of social interest, and the qualitative estimate of it as obligatory, is usually passed over at a leap by writers like Mr. Spencer, with the phrases, "Evidently then," or, "Hence it follows," or words to that effect. The gaps in such philosophic attempts to construct the moral out of the non-moral usually appear beneath the illative phrases which bind the paragraphs together in apparently logical sequence.

How much more may lie latent in this primitive moral sense, this forming child-consciousness of duty; what ethical ideas of things eternal and divine may be developed through experience from it, — is not just now the point which concerns us; the single fact to be observed in this connection is that some moral receptivity, or capability of being, which corresponds to the objective relations into which men are born, is to be found at the historic beginnings and in the first possibilities of man's ethical life.

Corresponding to the primeval stage of moral revelation there arises in the first moral being some spiritual apprehension of what is right, of that which ought to be, in his relations to the world around him. This is only saying that the moral consciousness is rational and real; that it springs from some real, although at first it may be very imperfect, moral perception of the relations of the subject to the objects amid which he awakes to thoughtful and responsible life.[1] There is equal veracity in the methods of life in its rational and its moral beginnings; man comes to himself by the same powers and in the same process of rational consciousness in these two relations of his being, on the one side as he exists in the realm of things, and on the other as he exists in the kingdom of worths; on the

[1] For a clear presentation of the objectivity of moral knowledge, and the relation to the divine which is given in the idea of right, see Martineau, *A Study of Religion*, vol. ii. pp. 26 sq.

two sides, that is to say, of his understanding and his moral intelligence. This holds true, however we may seek to explain the ultimate significance of these moral relations (this kingdom of worths), into some sense and perception of which man awakes. Whether the moral objective be described in terms merely of pleasure, or as the imperative of the social organism of which the individual is a part, or as a revelation of an eternal good which is realized from the beginning in God who is the good, — the method of the moral consciousness remains the same; it begins and develops through a simple principle of receptive cognition, or power of objective perception and discrimination between the qualitative relations of our lives. The intellectual consciousness has no advantage over the moral consciousness in the original principle of its becoming, or the primitive method of its formation; for both intellectually and morally we exist alike in certain relations of being; and through the impression upon us of those relations amid which we exist, we become conscious of their existence independently of our subjective will, and learn gradually to discriminate and define them with clear perception and judgments true to things. So that our whole consciousness in the entirety of its contents, intellectual and moral, rests ultimately in our faith in the reality of what is given immediately to consciousness; and there is no controversy between reason and faith concerning the original validity of our various perceptions, but only a difference to be marked between one faith, the purely intellectual, and its apprehensions, — the judgments of the understanding, — and another faith, the moral, and the judgments of conscience in the sphere of worths. In other words, the one part of our consciousness is as valid as the other part; the whole stream of our life runs back to a primitive source of immediate faith in consciousness and the contents given to it; and the distinctions, consequently, between right and wrong which are gained through the development of man's primitive moral nature may be affirmed as confidently, and with as much authority of absolute truth, as are the judgments of the under-

standing and its laws of logic. One must become an utter sceptic, — cutting himself off from his life at the very fountains, — or else accept in its fulness the outflow of his rational and moral experience.

The fact that primitive moral perceptions may be very confused, or misleading, does not invalidate this principle of moral apprehension any more than the failure of the little child to coördinate distances and to walk firmly invalidates the power of sense-perception. The principle of mental apprehension in either case is to be trusted. The capacity of the mind to receive is not a vain power. All around our complex life we can come into relations to things which shall in time be found in experience to be both true and right. The soul is constituted for true perception, intellectual and moral. Life may grow into harmony with the constitution of the universe, both in its physical and moral order. And if the moral consciousness of humanity is a real growth from a living power of moral apprehension and assimilation, we might expect to observe immaturity in the first manifestations of it; the perfect fruits of the Spirit require time.

Assuming, therefore, this power of true moral receptivity, or principle of immediate moral feeling-perception, at the source of the whole development of the moral consciousness of man, and regarding the primitive or prehistoric stage of the world's moral development as characterized by this immediacy of moral feeling without clear or strong moral discriminations and judgments, we pass now to the next and greater epoch of moral history and to its corresponding principle.

II. THE LEGAL EPOCH OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT[1]

1. The moral environment is determined by the commandments. The entrance of the law marks a new epoch in the advance of the moral consciousness alike in the experience of each growing child, and in the history of the

[1] Modern researches in ethnography have succeeded in tracing many connections between law (in the political sense) and primitive customs. The gain of a definite legal procedure marks a distinct epoch in the history of a com-

human race. Previous to the entrance of the commandment there may be more or less of vague, general moral feeling-perception, but there can be no sin and no real righteousness. The entrance of the law ends as by a stroke the first age of moral immaturity and innocence, and ushers in the next epoch of moral victory or of moral defeat. When the diffused light of the first moral consciousness has gathered itself into a clear focus upon some possible act, which is seen to be either clearly right or wrong, then moral probation has begun, and the moral choice determines the direction of the life for good or evil. We can imagine that a beneficent Creator might almost hesitate and shrink from bringing the man of his creation forward to this crisis of his moral growth, and its possibilities of good or evil; yet man must be pushed on to this second epoch of moral knowledge and decision if he is to be carried forward, whether through immediate victory or long subjection to sin and death, towards that matured character and complete righteousness in freedom which is the ethical goal of the creation. The tree of forbidden fruit must stand in the garden if man is to outgrow an earthly paradise. So the commandment enters, and on this earth at least the possibility of evil choice has become the historic solidarity of human sin.

It has been said that prehistoric psychology is largely chimerical; we have sought to conceive what that prehistoric capacity for moral life and its comparative innocence might be, only in so far as the facts of our present moral experience require us to assume the moral beginnings of human life. What we distinctly know in our personal experience is the moral life in this second epoch of its process as a life under the law, after the entrance of the commandment, and in the inheritance of sin. In the history of the people of Israel, the Book of the Covenant and the growth of the Mosaic legislation mark an era

munity. Still further ethical inquiries need to be made concerning the action and reaction between methods of legal procedure, when once gained, and the moral, and even theological, conceptions of different peoples. (See Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. ii. p. 448.) It is, however, with the distinctive era of the law in man's moral consciousness of it, that we are at present primarily concerned.

which is distinctively known as the dispensation of the law. The commandments of the law may be said to have constituted the immediate ethical environment of the moral life of Israel. The successive codes served to draw closer a legal circle of observances around the public conscience of the chosen people. There were, however, during this period two open ways out towards a larger and higher sphere of moral motive and conception, — prophetism and the Wisdom literature. The spirit of prophecy often soared above the legal plane; religion in the prophetic inspiration seems at times about to take wing and to rise to a universal gospel. The Wisdom literature marks a lower, more prosaic, yet open way out from the narrower view of the law as a system of outward observances to a broader conception of the laws of life which are to be recognized as in their nature ethical, and to be held in reverence as the summation of moral truth and wisdom. The fear of the Lord, which is taught in this Wisdom literature, is not exactly the fear of punishment which was inculcated by the priestly codes; if less distinctively religious in its recognition of the commandment as proceeding from God's mouth, or written in his ordinances, it was more distinctly ethical in its recognition of the great laws of life which wisdom uttered in the streets, and to know which is to understand the wisdom of the Lord.[1] We have seen how the prophetic spirit failed in Judaism; and even the more practical Wisdom literature proved powerless against the increasing legal conception both of religion and of righteousness in the later Pharisaism, which was the cramping and asphyxiating moral environment of St. Paul during his education under the law. Our moral training is so different that we find it difficult to conceive the life under the law of commandments, which the Apostle in his pre-Christian experience felt as though he were bound to a body of death. Yet in our own way, although different, we may still know what life under law is, for to a large extent the moral motivation of the modern world

[1] This is the conception which is presented in the first nine chapters of the book of Proverbs.

proceeds from general recognition of a moral order within which our freedom is to be restrained.

We grow up surrounded with social customs, bound by legal statutes, held together in a system of common law and through an inheritance of jurisprudence, which together constitute the dispensation of the law to modern communities, and which to many men is almost the only moral environment of which they take cognizance. The social and civil order is to such minds identical almost with the moral order. This legal dispensation assumes nobler form to the moral philosopher. All outward ordinances and civil institutions are recognized by him as revelations of a higher law and as having their permanence in the moral order of the universe. There are eternal laws of life. There is a moral inevitableness of good or evil, as these celestial laws of life are followed or broken. The natural order, which physical science discloses, is analogy and forceful metaphor for a moral order no less infrustrable, and as universal in its dominion. The apprehension in the modern world of this higher law has found noble expression in this famous sentence of Kant: "Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe the oftener and the more steadily they are contemplated, the starry heavens above me, and the moral law within me."[1]

Julius Müller holds rightly that "the moral law as the rule of the human will is none other than moral good"; and hence, in criticism of Kant's apostrophe of Duty, he remarks: "The impression of sublimity and of majesty which the moral law makes upon the mind that contemplates it, provided its sensibilities are still unblunted, does not arise from its form merely as an unconditional command, but from the very nature of its contents, upon which the form itself depends." This is only saying that the law reveals a real moral order, that the commandment puts us under obligation to a real righteousness. The characteristics which have been regarded as the determinative marks of the moral law in Christian theology, alike in the early Catholic, the Mediæval, and the Protestant Church, are (as noted by Müller) universality, equality for all, and unchangeableness; and, in consequence of these, unconditional authority. See Müller's discussion of law in his *Christian Doctrine of Sin* (Eng. Trans.), vol. i. pp. 32 sq.; also Dorner, *System der Christ. Sittenlehre*, s. 181.

[1] *Kritik der pract. Vernunft*, s. 288.

2. The subjective principle of the moral life which corresponds to this stage of legal environment, may be described in general as obedience. The moral life (which is harmony of the inward and outward moral conditions), consists in submission of the will to the imperative of the law. The legal stage is reached whenever duty is conceived of as an imperative demanding obedience. The commandment may be regarded as imposed by authority from without; or it may be found as a law written within; but in either case it is authority, and the principle of moral life is obedience. In Judaism the conception of law as an outward commandment of the Lord was gained; in Stoicism the conception of law as the inward nature of man was attained; but the moral principle of life under the law, both in Judaism with its word of the Lord, and in Stoicism with its inward deification of man's nature, is essentially the same; the law requires entire self-surrender of the individual to its authority. The moral welfare of man consists in absolute submission to the higher law, whether that law be conceived of as the supreme principle of his nature, or as the will of God. This legal epoch of morality, and the growth of its answering principle of obedience, which historically was sharply defined in Judaism and in Stoicism, — in the final outward legalism of the religion of Israel, and the final inward legalism of the religion of Rome, — was not a simple and sudden result of the moral process of history. For within the legal epoch itself successive stages of moral development may be distinguished. There is a history of the growth of the human conscience under law. And in order that we may understand the course of the moral movement of history towards the moral ideal, these several successive eras in the growth of conscience under the legal dispensation need to be more carefully discriminated and defined.

The history of the formation of conscience under the law in Israel, is of all moral history the most significant and illuminative. Comparative ethics may find in the life of other peoples, and the remains of their literatures, traces of a similar moral process, signs of the same moral forces in

human nature, and evidences of the one moral movement of history through the law towards some higher ethical gospel; but, as the religion of Israel was distinctively the religion of the law, so the moral history of Israel is pre-eminently the history of the moral consciousness of man in and through the legal stages of its development. We have then to distinguish further the chief stages in the growth of conscience in Israel under the law toward the moral consciousness of the gospel.

(1) The earlier stage in the growth of conscience in Israel was the tribal and communal. Religion was an external revelation, and morality an outward obedience. The angel of the Lord called to Abraham out of heaven;[1] God's word was to be obeyed as unquestioned duty. There was at this stage of revelation much external authority, and little exercise of private judgment. Indeed, in the earlier literature of the Bible our sharply individualized word conscience is not to be found. The individual was not to know *with* God, but rather *from* God; often some external sign would reveal the thing to be done. Duty was not knowing the morally good, like a son with God, but submission as a servant to the word which proceeded as a direct command from the mouth of the Almighty.

Such was the moral environment of external revelation, and the moral principle of implicit obedience in Abraham's day. The simple biblical narrative reflects with perfect artlessness this moral life and consciousness of the primitive patriarchal age. What is right for Abraham? Whatever God orders. What shall Abraham do? Not what he thinks God ought to desire of him; but he shall bring the sacrifice which God has required of him. The story of the offering of Isaac can be ethically interpreted only as we put ourselves back into the primitive moral conditions of Abraham's life. The question which on our moral plain at once arises is, How could Abraham have supposed that Jehovah could have required of him the life of his first-born son? We see from the result, when a ram was substituted for the son whom Abraham had bound to the altar,

[1] Gen. xxii. 11.; cf. xxii. 1, 2; xii. 1, 4; xvii. 1-11.

that God did not desire the offering of human sacrifices. Had Abraham known God at the mountain's foot as well as he knew him at the mountain's top, there would have been no need of that long, silent, heart-breaking journey up the mountain's side. The ethical problem, as we now read the narrative in the light of our later and better revelation, is not how Jehovah could have commanded the offering of Isaac, but how Abraham for a moment could have believed that such was the will of the Lord.[1] No external authority could impose such an act on us as moral duty. No outward sign, no apparent miracle, would lead the man who has known God through Christ to believe that an act destructive of the whole truth of fatherhood could really be required by Him from whom every fatherhood on earth and in heaven is named.[2] We should abide by the inner light, and doubt the outward vision. We should cling to the known moral truth, and wait for the explanation of any seemingly contradictory sign from heaven.

Abraham, however, was but a moral pupil under the law. The right to him was what Jehovah willed. Duty was unquestioning obedience to the commandment. It was not the son's knowledge *with* the Father of the morally good that led Abraham to prepare for the sacrifice of Isaac. He might trust that in some unknown way the commandment would not prevent the promise; he might hope that by some divine favor the joy which he had found in his first-born might not be taken wholly and forever from him; but there was the commandment of the Lord, as he could receive it, and as he understood it; and obedience was the only righteousness he knew. It was for him the righteousness of faith. A perfect trust in the will of God characterized his obedience. Such committal of himself to what he had apprehended to be the word of the Lord, — entire, unquestioning, absolute surrender of the man to the will of the Almighty, — was his great act of obedience, and the moral heroism of his faith; and as such it was counted

[1] Canon Mozley, *Ruling Ideas in Early Ages*, Lect. ii., dwells at length on this question. The answer is to be found in the sacrificial customs of the age.
[2] Eph. iii. 15.

to him for righteousness. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, with a true historic insight, takes Abraham's name from one of the earliest chapters of the history of the true religion as a type of the man of faith. Nothing better than this simple biblical story illustrates alike the necessary conditions of the beginning of man's moral life under the law, and the corresponding principle of moral submission which was its obedience of faith.[1]

The earlier communal stage of the development of conscience has its analogue in the forming conscience of the little child. There appears at first in the mere child little independent or individual sense of right and wrong; the commandment of the home is moral law to the child. Yet under the law of the home, and through the discipline of obedience, the child's moral nature begins to gather substance and character, and to grow into an independent and firm conscience of its own.

(2) The next stage in the history of conscience in Israel was the era in which Israel became conscious of itself as the people of God — the era of the national conscience under the law.

The beginnings of a distinct and determinate social conscience appear in the age of Moses. A lawgiver goes down to the people with the tables of the law in his hand. The Book of the Covenant is the constitution of a people. In Israel moral authority was still external and legal; but it was no longer a merely individual understanding of some word of the Lord, nor was it following a divine call by the solitary father of a single family. The people are commanded to be a kingdom of priests, an holy nation.[2] Obligation has become a national sense of the service which is owed to the God of Israel. Sinai with its mighty thunderings and voice of Jehovah, is as the visible and command-

[1] The further question how could God tempt or try Abraham by allowing him for an hour to mistake His real intention towards Isaac, belongs to the theology rather than to the ethics of the Old Testament. The moral principle of the divine treatment of Abraham must be found in God's whole educational method and purpose — a subject which I have elsewhere discussed at some length in the third chapter of *Old Faiths in New Light*.

[2] Ex. xix. 6 (J. E.); later (in P.) Lev. xi. 44, 45.

ing conscience of the whole people of God. Consequently all duties, privileges, and hopes of the Israelite were bound up in the national covenant with the Lord. The individual man finds his life measured and weighed for him in all its relations and obligations by the law of his nation. The person has moral being and assurance of prosperity only in the moral being and welfare of the people. Mosaism introduces a social-legal stage of moral development. Israel is the historic example of a religious socialism. The moral consciousness of Israel is the public opinion of a people which had been formed and fashioned under one law and in one moral mould.[1] The morality of Israel is that of the social group or organism. The age of acute individuality is not yet come. Protestantism does not belong to the Mosaic era of the history of Israel.

(3) In the development of the religious and moral consciousness of Israel through the prophets the signs of another and larger movement become apparent.[2]

Both in religion and ethics a tendency towards universalism modifies the intense particularism of the Hebrew consciousness. The covenant of Jehovah had been made with the one people of His choice, but it contains a blessing for other nations. Israel shall still be exalted as the mountain of the Lord; but from the house of Jacob many peoples shall be taught the ways of the Lord.[3] Together with this broadening of the religious view, the ethical concep-

[1] This general characteristic is not affected by critical discrimination between the different codes except as the successive codes served to accentuate and develop the legal national consciousness.

[2] The prophetic era preceded in time the completed law; the finished priestly code is now generally regarded as belonging to a late period; and Hebrew particularism became marked after the age of the great prophets. But in the order of spiritual development the moral and religious consciousness of the prophets is a distinct advance over the legal conception. Moreover, in the earlier period, a larger core of legal customs and observances than literary critics (like Kuenen, *Hist. of Israel*, i. ss. 274 *seq.*) have allowed, may be found to be required as the result of a more scientific study of the institutions of Israel from a sociological point of view. There are analogies and laws of sociology under which the current literary criticism of the Old Testament needs to be much more thoroughly tested. A conservative critical estimate of the legal basis in the earlier period of the history of Israel is given by Driver, *Int. to the Lit. of the O. T.*, pp. 144 *seq.* Cf. Reuss, *Geschichte der Heil. Schriften*, i. ss. 70–93.

[3] Is. ii. 2–4.

tions of the prophets overflow the limits of what may be called the conscience of the social group. The modern conception of international law is still far from the minds of the kings and the prophets of Judah; but moral principles and religious hopes of universal validity gain place and power amid the peculiar obligations of the covenant people and above the ceremonial of their law.[1]

This religious and moral broadening of the prophetic teaching is accompanied at the same time by a spiritual deepening of the life of the true Israel. Morality is seen to be something more inward and spiritual than an external observance of the law. There is something better than sacrifice.[2] Running parallel with these tendencies towards universalism and spirituality in the religious-ethical life of Israel there may be noted likewise an increasing sense of the worth of the individual, and, consequently, of the personal interest of the individual soul in the future life.

Our sharply individualized moral substantive, conscience, it is true, is still not to be found even in the later prophets. And it has been a debated question whether the hope of personal immortality was taught in the Old Testament, or entered into the thought of the common people of Israel. It would be going beyond the facts to deny that the personal right and the future destiny of the individual soul were unthought of, and untouched by any light of revelation, in the whole Mosaic period; nor are we to infer from the absence of our distinctive word conscience, that the reign of the law was wholly a reign of external authority. For the Hebrew had his own word, the heart, to denote the individual's participation in the religious consciousness of the nation. But the predominant hope of Israel was the hope of social immortality, the triumph of the people of God. Not until the people had entered the shadow of the eclipse of the hope of Israel, during the dark and disappointing Maccabean age, did the more individualized word conscience make its appearance. (Wisdom xvii. 11. In Ecc. x. 20, the word means nothing more than our word consciousness.) In that same time of trouble and bitter national disappointment, the doctrine of the resurrection of the individual grew to the definiteness which it showed in the teachings of the Pharisees in our Lord's day.

(4) The fourth stage in the growth of conscience is that of the fully developed individual conscience under

[1] See Is. xix. 19–25; xlv. 22–24; xli. 1, 4; Ps. lxxxvii. 4; Zech. xiv.

[2] Ps. xl. 6–8; Is. i. 11; Hos. vi. 6. This is to be found earlier also in 1 Sam. xv. 22.

the law. If we turn from a chapter of moral judgment in Isaiah, or a lamentation of Jeremiah, or even from a penitential psalm, to the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, we shall see at once the similarity and the still greater contrast between the period of moral development, which has just been described, and the later and fully formed moral consciousness of the individual soul under the law.

These two moral periods indeed are alike characterized by the objectifying of morals in an outward law. Paul's conception of the law as a commandment of Jehovah is no less supreme than was Isaiah's. The moral imperative is still the spoken word of Jehovah. As a law of commandments it requires complete submission and obedience in every particular of it on the part of man. And that law of commandments is holy, just, and good.

But beneath the resemblance a significant contrast appears in the profounder sense of individual responsibility and condemnation. God is still the Sovereign Lawgiver; yet not the lawgiver for the people only, but also immediately and personally of the individual soul. God is the Judge, but not of the nation of Israel only; He is Paul's judge; and Paul is himself bound to sin and without righteousness in the sight of God.

This contrast between the earlier forms and the latest stage of the growth of conscience in Israel will become strikingly apparent when we put side by side several expressions of the sense of sin which may be gathered from the sacred literature of these different periods.

Thus, taking the narratives as they read, in the account of Adam's fall in the book of Genesis only a few words indicate what was the sense of sin felt by the first man who became conscious of wrong-doing. It seems to have been mainly a feeling of fear. Adam's sense of sin was like a child's fear of punishment. "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid."[1] The sense of wrong was apparently coincident with the feeling of fear. Fear follows the first sin. Man's first sin was man's first fear. If

[1] Gen. iii. 10.

the literary materials had been preserved, by means of which we might depict, side by side, Adam's moral consciousness of fear after his sin, and Paul's profound conviction of his life-long failure to become a righteous man, we should probably discover between the two this antithesis of a vague, regretful, timid sense of something gone wrong, and the sharply defined, piercing sense of personal dishonor and guilt. Death was something unknown, and vaguely to be feared — the shadow of a coming evil — to that first sinner; sin was death, a living death, a hopeless loss, and bitter misery of being, to that full-grown, moral man who would keep the law of God, and could not do it. Adam after his sin could not possibly have composed a narrative of personal experience like that contained in the seventh chapter of Romans; probably, could such a transcript from man's later experience of sin have been read to him, he would only have vaguely understood its moral intensity of conscious guilt and despair.[1]

Very interesting, and instructive also, as distinguishing these eras in the growth of conscience, is the comparison which we may make without drawing at all upon our imagination, between the same chapter of Romans and the fifty-first psalm.[2] The psalm is like a child's cry of contrition in its mother's lap: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness; according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." But the chapter of Romans is the cry of a man's soul from out the depths: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" The former is a youth's quick contrition, and easily reviving hope: "Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice." The latter is a man's soberer recognition of his moral inability, and his profounder moral despair: "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is

[1] This comparison is not affected by critical questions concerning the origin of the first chapters of Genesis; for, whatever the original documents, they represent an earlier, not the final Judaic consciousness of sin.

[2] If this is a national psalm, as the critics suppose, its confession of sin is put in a personal form.

present with me, but to do that which is good is not." The former is quick to own the human sinfulness from which the transgression which is confessed had sprung: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." In the latter the dark fact of original sin falls into the background, and the sense of personal guilt pervades with its deep gloom the moral consciousness: "But I am carnal, sold under sin." The moral law as the will of God is acknowledged in the psalm: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight: that thou mayest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." In the confession of sin in Romans the law is recognized as in itself something holy, and the commandment is good. The psalm is the weeping of a penitent child who has done a wrong act, and is distressed by the shame of it. The confession of sin in Romans is the voice of a man who has learned how helpless and worthless he is before the pure righteousness of God, and who knows that he must perish as one bound to death unless he can become upright and stand as a just soul among the just in the presence of the God of righteousness. We turn to the penitential psalm when we would mourn over particular sins; we read that profounder chapter of St. Paul's experience when we would fathom our deepest personal consciousness of the human sinfulness from which we would be delivered as from a body of death.

These stages of moral development which can be distinguished in the sacred literature of the Hebrew people, may likewise be observed, though with less conspicuous demarcation, in the moral history and literatures of the Gentiles. The primitive, child-like moral consciousness is artlessly reflected in the songs of Homer; Athens presents a decidedly communal conscience, or the conscience of a distinct social group. One national conception of virtue as well-being or happiness, in the large sense of the word, pervades the moral philosophy of the Greeks. Finally, Roman Stoicism is the determination of the individual conscience in the firm mould of law, according to the

unalterable nature of things; Stoicism marks the last stand of the solitary conscience in its own invincible right against the world.

Thus both embryologically in the birth and growth of the individual, and historically in the age-long moral development of man, may be witnessed these several moral epochs; after the prehistoric, nature state, the family or communal age, the national and legal era, and eventually the accentuated individual age of conscience. Along moral courses thus marked and distinguished, and through stadia of development which succeed one another in conformity to the nature of ethical being, the moral creation presses on towards the realization of the moral Ideal, which in the beginning was with God.

3. From this description of the successive moral eras up to the final legal stage before Christianity, we pass next to a closer determination of the moral results which are thus reached, or the moral contents of consciousness which are gained in this period of moral development.

(1) There emerges clearly at this stage the idea of right, and its imperative. Man has become conscious of himself as existing under a higher law which commands him with an absolute obligation. It is not a physical necessity which he has no choice but to follow; neither is it an æsthetic judgment to which he pleases to conform; it is a commandment of right which he recognizes as having authority over him, and which in his moral freedom he ought to obey. The conception of right as the one absolute imperative of conduct, becomes in this epoch of moral history clearly developed and discriminated from all other ideas.

(*a*) The Origin of the Idea of Right.

Whatever may be our attempted explanation of the rise of conscience and the emergence of moral ideas in human history, our account must be equal to the historic facts; our theory should contain the full content of the moral consciousness at this stage of its development. As one moral resultant of history is this distinct and luminous idea of right. It shines like a star in the moral firmament.

It were no account of a star to say that it is sodium, or hydrogen gas, or any or all of the elementary gases whose lines may be read off in the stellar spectrum. For what we see is not sodium, nor any of these elements, but the star; and the star, however it may have been formed, or whatever elements simpler than itself may enter into its constitution, is itself a distinct, separate, and single sphere of light; the mere enumeration of its supposed elements does not describe the star, nor account for its separate shining in the sky. The star as a star is object of our vision. What is its character as a star? What is the principle of the combination of its elements; what the order in which it consists? Similarly is it with the judgment of right in the consciousness of man. Our human idea of right may not have come to be what it is except through a long process of development; it may not be without traces of simple moral feelings, elementary instincts, or earlier and separable associations. If it could be shown how this idea has been formed, and consolidated, and rounded into a clear and fixed moral idea through age-long processes, under fervent heat amid the passions of humanity; such natural history of the process of the formation of this distinctive idea of right, although interesting and instructive, would not explain the essential character of the idea, or the moral principle of its formation; it would not take away its distinct and supreme existence and light as a fixed moral idea in the mind of man. For, as just intimated, the very thing in the skies to be understood is the nature or tendency of the creation which, out of whatever elements, at a given period makes the appearance of the distinct and separate star possible; from some beginnings the creation has moved towards these results of the fixed stars of heaven. And this principle of combination, order, and light which finally sets the stars in their places, is the real mystery, the true cause of the whole astronomic order; so in the moral universe the force which organizes whatever natural elements of life into a moral consciousness and order, is the supernal ethical fact.

Somewhere in the process of moral forming, at some time in the course of the evolution, the power to shape and to organize the human elements for this idea of right must have laid hold of them. The moral idea could not have emerged from the elementary chaos of nature, unless the potency and the power of it had in some way entered into and become a law of the formation of those elements of humanity. You can never get a star in space, if there be no principle of star-formation in the original nebula.

We are now reasoning from the distinctive individuality of the resultant moral idea back to its cause in the moral antecedents of human nature; these, we argue, must have contained from of old the moral potential because the final result is the distinctive idea of right.

(*b*) The Nature of the Idea of Right.

The reasoning may be inverted, and it may be claimed not merely that an analysis of the contents of our common idea of right serves to separate this distinctive moral whole into several elements, some of which may be unmoral, such as custom, fear of punishment, sympathy, or whatever else of human instinct or habit may enter into the fully formed conception of right; but also that after we have sifted from the moral idea these natural elements of it, there is left a moral precipitate, which defies analysis into anything simpler; and this moral element, which remains after all possible scientific analysis of conscience, is the characteristic thing, the key to the whole combination, the constitutive element of the fully formed or organized moral judgment of right and wrong. The right is the one thing which ought to be done. The obligation of the sense of the right is the unanalyzable and ultimate element of the idea of right. Alike in the history of the race, and in the life of the individual soul, there comes a time when, on the one hand, the right is recognized as an authoritative law of duty, and, on the other hand, obedience is seen to be the only true position of the will. Duty becomes an august power before whose authority appetite is dumb, and passion must be bound. No other moral word can be substituted for the word duty. Even the

philosophers who would put labored circumlocutions in the place of it, are compelled to fall back upon this simple and ultimate word, which the common people can understand, and for which no other can be made to serve in the language of the world's moral life, — duty. That glorious and supreme idea may rise, like another day, on the mind which has been confused in the half-understood instincts and misleading appetites of nature; but when once it is seen, it shines with its own clear light; it is seen to be itself, and is not to be resolved into anything lower or less divine. The right is right always; when once perceived, there is nothing more to be said; it is light that illumines; it is truth in which the way is made plain; reason has no choice but to follow.

The new moral era which began with a clear perception of right as right, was not indeed discontinuous with any preceding, more nebulously moral life of man; all the ethical as well as physical processes of life are to be conceived of as continuous; but, nevertheless, it was a new era, and the dawn of another day of life.

(2) With the idea of the right which follows the entrance of the commandment, there arises also the moral consciousness of the rights of men.

In the biblical history human rights are seen to be secured in the original divine right, which is revealed in the law. The righteousness of God is the ground of human rights. There is a divine order to be observed by men in their relations to one another. This idea of a higher right is precedent to, and secures in its eternal sanction, all personal rights. From the primal duty of a man to conform to the divine righteousness follows his obligation to maintain his own rights and the rights of his neighbor.[1]

In modern philosophical ethics the origin of the idea of

[1] Gen. iv. 9–10. The blood of the first murdered man cries unto the Lord. God makes Cain his brother's keeper. Men are to bring their causes before God; Ex. xxii. 7–9. The second table of human duties and rights follows the first table of obligations towards God. Similarly the enforcement of various human rights in the Mosaic law proceeds on the ground of a divine law of right, and the primary obligation of the people in their covenant with God. (Ex. xxi. 6, 22; xxii. 9; Deut. v. 32–33; vii. 12: xxiv. 15, etc.; Rom. xii. 1.)

rights has been found, not in some supposed social contract, or primarily in the necessity of social co-operation, but in the ethical nature of man — in the nature of personality.

See Ulrici, *Gott und Menschen*, vol. ii. s. 219 ff. "For in reality man is not born with rights, but only with duties, and only for this reason does he have right to demand that the possibility shall be secured to him of performing his duty. His rights follow only from his duties, and hence can be derived only from them" (s. 231). Any other derivation of the idea of right, Ulrici argues, takes from it ethical obligation, and in the last analysis makes might right. Similarly Dorner derives rights from duty: "The person has to maintain his personal rights as organ of the moral idea and for its sake, but not from egoism." "The original right of man, namely, the true basal right (*Grundrecht*), which follows from his duty, is the right to be a moral being" (*Christ. Sittenlehre*, ss. 205–208). *Per contra* Stahl argued that rights are not consequences of duty, but an immediate contents of an objective order of right. (*Phil. des Rechtes*, ii. s. 222.) Lotze, however, says: "Our right is that which we first feel as duty towards others, and consequently also regard as the duty of others towards us" (*Mikrokosmus*, vol. ii. s. 413). Mr. Mulford has tersely said: "Rights belong to man, since in his nature he is constituted as a person" (*The Nation*, p. 73). While recognizing the correspondence of rights and duties, he derives both from personality (p. 101); it is in the realization of his personality, which is made in the image of God, that man has both rights and duties. This immediate connection of rights with personality is valid as against Kant's formal conception of rights, and his tendency to conceive of freedom and duty also only in relation to an abstract and formal law; but the ordinary view, indicated in the quotations given above, in which rights follow duties, is true so far as a right always implies an antecedent obligation, moral or legal. Thus my duty is presented first to me in the maxim which Mr. Mulford gives as the fundamental law of rights: "Be a person, and respect others as persons." Becoming conscious of my obligation so to do, I gain further conception of my rights as a person, and the rights of other persons in respect to me. Yet Mr. Mulford's argument is profoundly true, that the real derivation both of duties and rights is from the nature of man as a personal being existing in a moral order, and having a moral vocation, the ultimate ground of which is divine.

Another theory of rights regards them as equivalents of social utilities, or as consequences of biological laws. But either the ethical obligation of these laws of life is suffered to slip in unobserved in the course of the induction of them from nature, or, when it is recognized, it is at once exchanged for the conception that it is reasonable to limit the freedom of individuals for the sake of the species. The right, if not reduced ultimately to might, is

transformed into the reasonable, which again is turned into the beneficial, which again is converted into the moral, —and the circle is complete. But the troublesome question remains, why ought the individual to prefer the socially beneficial to his own interest? What principle of right secures all rights?

The latest biological derivation of the idea of rights is given in Mr. Spencer's *Justice*. The abstract formula of justice is contained in "the law of equal freedom." "Every man is free to do that which he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man." (p. 46). The sentiment of justice, Mr. Spencer compounds by mixing in his moral chemistry certain feelings and fears which arise in the course of the struggle of life, and which may also be traced on a sub-human plane in the habits especially of the gregarious animals.

Those who hold the view already expressed that right runs back into duty, and that all rights are dependent on a supreme righteousness which is morally discerned, need have no dispute with the inductions from which Mr. Spencer generalizes the formula of justice, so far as these can possibly be made to go. For inductions from the struggle of life up into some moral order, only serve to show that the universe is constituted to attain its good in that moral order and under its ethical idea; Mr. Spencer's deductions, also, from the biological laws of life, by which the necessity of the maintenance of human rights under the law of equal freedom, is proved, confirm the validity of that moral order whose ethical quality is the reflection of an eternal righteousness. Mr. Spencer compares with his own formula for justice the determination of the idea of right by Kant which he states had only recently become known to him. Kant derived the idea of right from the law of freedom: "The right is the comprehension of the conditions under which the choice of one can be united with the choice of another under a general law of freedom" (*Metaphysik der Sitten*, s. 30). In this definition Kant not only proceeded, as Mr. Spencer recognizes, from the metaphysical side, but also he left behind him any merely naturalistic derivation of ethics from unethical appetencies and feelings. The difference between Kant's philosophy of right and Spencer's biology of it, is wide as the difference between a reverence for the authority of moral law, and a comfortable sense of life amid favorable conditions. The latter is not contradictory of the former, but rather may be confirmatory of it; but the former is superior to the latter and not to be identified with it. Mr. Spencer might also have found his law of justice stated in "the maxim of co-existence," as Stahl has summarized it (*opus cit.* ii. s. 243).

The consideration of particular rights may be conveniently postponed to the chapter on duties; but the rise of the idea of rights, correlate to duties,[1] is here to be noticed

[1] Strictly speaking, it is more accurate to say that obligations and rights are correlative, for the conception of obligations implies a relation of persons;

as one mark of the stage of moral development under the law, which we now are reviewing.

(3) Another characteristic of the moral consciousness in its legal epoch is the sense of sin as something morally imputable to the individual, — the consciousness of sin as guilt. A sense of personal responsibility under the commandment, and conviction of sin under the law, are clearly marked facts in moral experience; they are typical facts of man's moral consciousness, — the moral type, that is, which we find developed in man's conscience has among others these distinctive signs and characteristics. To ignore them, or not to give them due place in our moral classification, would be as unscientific as it would be for the biologist to leave out some bone, or other distinguishing mark of typical forms, in his classification of the different species of animals. Yet it would be hard to find in the writings of moral philosophers of the modern and evolutionary school any adequate determination, or discussion even, of the place which the fifty-first psalm or the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans may properly hold in the moral classification of human nature.

In the earlier Hebrew conception sin was regarded as a failure to keep some requirement, and consequently as an exposure to punishment: forensic liability before Israel's God rather than moral guilt marked the earlier sense of sin. Still sin was regarded as against Jehovah; and as the knowledge of his holy will increased, the sense of sin as moral wrong deepened. Moreover, as Jehovah was believed to be the judge of men, to whom all might look for vindication, sins against men took on a deeper religious significance, and were condemned by the prophets as unrighteousness before God. The sins of the people which the prophets spare not, were not legal omissions, but social iniquities. Even in the school of Judaic legalism in which St. Paul was educated, to his earnest moral nature the law was holy, just, and good as the will of God, and it condemned him with a hopeless condemnation.

Christian ethics recognizes in the personal sense of sin under the law one of the landmarks of moral history. "But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died": whenever in the history of Israel as a people, or

duty implies a relation between the moral subject and a law. So Rothe, *Theol. Eth.* s. 853.

of Paul as an individual, that took place, a moral epoch was reached. The legal era in its beginning, in its character, and in its consequences was marked by these indestructible moral signs; "the commandment came," — man knew himself to be under moral sovereignty: "sin revived," — man became conscious of his sin as sin: "and I died," — the sense of guilt was a human hopelessness and despair to be likened only to the physical evil of death.

(4) In the moral development through the legal stage there may be traced also a corresponding growth in the moral conception of God.

The idea of God is not brought to man's conscience wholly from without; it is the truth of God which is implicit in the moral life of man. It is not so much an inference from conscience as a revelation through conscience. Accordingly, as the moral history deepens and enlarges, the revelation of God through our moral experience may be expected to grow clearer and richer. It was so in the history of Israel. The increasing ethicization of the idea of God in Israel appears on the surface of the sacred literature of Israel. It belongs to the theology of the Old Testament to trace this moral purification and exaltation of the idea of God under the light of new critical studies of the sacred literature. It must suffice for our present purpose to observe the fact that, under the schooling of the law, the consciousness grows and deepens that the law is to be obeyed not simply as a commandment, but as itself the revelation of a holy character, which ought to reign because it is altogether just and true. The law is seen to be enthroned in the eternal righteousness of God.

The following lines of the moral development of the idea of God in Israel may be noticed. (1) Originally the people of Israel were separated from other nations not simply as a people under the rule of their God, for all peoples owned their national gods, but as a people whose God was himself different from other gods. It was "a difference in the personal character of Jehovah" that distinguished Israel from the surrounding nations (W. Robertson Smith, *opus cit.* p. 70). (2) The experiences of the nation served to bring to revelation in the moral consciousness of the people, or at least of the prophets, the higher ethical elements which were involved in

the character of Jehovah. The great variety of names for God and the divine attributes, which spring up in the course of the history of Israel, and by which the religious teachers seek to make Jehovah known, indicate the progress of the ethical conception of God in Israel. When the prophets gain a profoundly ethical view of the character of Jehovah, they come into conflict with the popular theology; for, according to a lower conception, the God of Israel could not fail to protect and bless his people; but according to the higher prophetic knowledge of God as the Holy One, he must act in accordance with his character, even though in his righteousness he shall reject his people. (See Kuenen, *National Religions*, p. 124.) Further signs of the increasing moralization of the thought of God in the legal period might be found in the less anthropomorphic expressions of the later priestly narrative. (See Driver, *Int. to the Lit. of the O. T.* p. 133.) Ewald regards the names of God in the Old Testament as marking successive epochs in the experience of Israel of God's self-revelation to his people; although later criticism may lead us to use with caution these names of God as landmarks of revelation, these words of Ewald may still be quoted as a true characterization of the moral growth in the knowledge of God under the law: "We find . . . through all these two thousand years an advancing purification (of speech concerning God), up to the very purest and most spiritual, as it appears approved in the New Testament" (*Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, ii. s. 105).

What the ethical-religious conception of God had become in Judaism in its better form, before its degradation in later Rabbinism, we may learn from the pre-Christian theology of St. Paul. His thought of God before his conversion may be gathered from the traces of it which still seem to be left in his Christian theology, taken together with what may be learned of the teachings in which he received his schooling under the law.

The following charactistics may be thus marked in the pre-Christian theology which Paul may have learned in the school of Gamaliel. (*a*) God was conceived as the Sovereignty above the world, before whom man appears, not with whom man is to live. The transcendental tendency to put the God of Israel, in exalted holiness, far from the world, had become positive and pronounced in Judaism. Religion, accordingly, became a forensic procedure before God rather than a personal dealing with God.[1] (*b*) The law is the immediate and pressing concern of the soul. God is law to the soul; law is God to man. Salvation is through keeping the commandments. Right-

[1] Weber, *opus cit.* s. 144.

eousness is fulfilling the law. In Paul's pre-Christian theology the thought of God's exalted holiness, absolute sovereignty, and unchangeableness were the controlling ideas; and religion was resolved into the relation of the soul to the law, which is the revelation of God's glory and the unalterable declaration of the Divine Will. Under these overshadowing ideas of Paul's pre-Christian theology, some gentler attributes of mercy, love, and compassion might have crept; but the fundamental elements of the ethics of the divine nature were comprised in the holy law of God. This ethics of the divine as absolute law, as Paul had learned it, was still a sublime conception of Deity. Moral Sovereignty, as revealed in the glory of unalterable law, is a grand and awful conception. Paul's moral theology, which he took with him from the schools of Jerusalem on the way to Damascus, was a strong and awful idea of righteousness; it was a moral conviction not easy to be explained, if conscience be after all only the refinement of some animal instinct or the efflorescence of some social sentiment. The righteousness which a man ought to attain, according to Paul's Judaic conception of it (and still more in his Christian knowledge of it), was no generalization from utilities. His conscience, in his pre-Christian period, had not learned to walk peacefully with God, the righteous Father; but it stood still and trembled, naked and afraid, before the Holy God of Israel.

The pre-Christian idea of God which Paul had attained, and in which his religious and ethical spirit had been brought to an arrest just before his conversion, has its necessary time and place in the moral order of human experience. It is not a final moral idea of God. It is not a thought of God, and of man's relation to God, in which either the human mind or the human heart can rest. The time for such essentially Calvinistic conception of the sovereignty of Law as God is just before Christ. Its place is in the synagogue rather than in the church. It is a preliminary and pedagogic conception of God which leads up towards, and is destined to find fulfilment in, the truth of

God's holy Fatherhood, which will remain after that which is in part in human theologies shall have passed away.[1]

(5) In this legal stage of moral development the retributive forces of conscience are predominant.

The voice of conscience echoes the threatening of offended law. The whole moral consciousness is overshadowed by the gloom of impending penalty. Moral fear pervades the ethical life. This fear is not simply nor solely a shrinking from threatened suffering, or an Adamic sense of loss of some pleasant paradise. Evil might gladly be welcomed even, and patiently endured, if only the sharper sting of moral condemnation might be avoided. The distinctive element of conscience at this stage is the sense of moral retribution, and the dishonor of soul in view of the just incurrence of moral penalty. And in proportion as the Power which inflicts penalty is seen to be holy, just, and good, in that proportion does the dread which is involved in the legal conscience become a purely ethical fear. It is not so much a fear of loss of physical happiness, but an intense shrinking from the pain of moral displeasure. The happiness which is desired, and which is seen to have been hopelessly forfeited by disobedience to the law, is distinctively moral blessedness. An immense and apparently irremediable dissatisfaction of the soul with itself enters tragically into this retributive woe of conscience. Paul's experience as given in the seventh chapter of Romans is the *locus classicus* of retributive conscience in this period of self-condemnation under the law.

Such sense of inward penalty is the goal of the pre-Christian course of conscience. Sin is punished in the consuming sense of inward dishonor and shame. No ethical theory, therefore, can possibly prove adequate to the full moral consciousness in its last and highest development under the law, which does not do justice to this fact of self-retribution in conscience. The highest good, even on this legal stage, must be made inclusive

[1] Upon the ethical necessity of the legal period even without the supposition of sin, the necessity of the law in a normal moral development, see Dorner, *System der Christ. Sittenlehre*, s. 279.

of moral self-satisfaction as well as of any or all possible pleasure in the possession of the conditions of outward well-being. Eudemonism must show how inward justification is to be gained, as well as secure the comfortableness of happy adaptations of the personal life to its outward conditions, if it is to be true to the ethical consciousness in its fullest and clearest legal development.

(6) Another element of the legal conscience which is involved in those already mentioned, but which deserves distinct notice, is the demand for expiation.

No phenomenon of moral history in antiquity is more striking than this cry of conscience for the expiation of guilt. The whole sacrificial system of the ancient world proceeds from this moral demand of man's nature, and rests upon it. How shall sin be expiated? The Greek tragedies enforce the law of retribution which cannot be frustrated, and in them the darker crimes seem to pass on to their awful fate without hope of expiation. We read in the Greek poets sublime lessons of the inevitableness of justice and the inexorable certainties of retribution. But we may find in them only hints and adumbrations of a gracious possibility of reconciliation and hope of final expiation for human guilt. The need is felt, the consciousness of guilt cries out for atonement; but the answer to this prayer of the conscience must come, if at all, as a gospel from above.

In the history of the true religion in Israel the law of retribution had been wrought by judgment after judgment into the moral fibre of the Hebrew consciousness; the prophets taught that the people whom God had chosen could become through their transgression a people rejected of God. The covenant had not been kept by the nation: and the people in their sins had been visited with the divine displeasure. How shall the Lord be made favorable to Zion? By what suffering shall the sin of the people be expiated? Shall God restore Israel when it has received double for its transgression? Or shall the elect remnant be the means of some future divine salvation of Israel, and the righteous servant justify many? The later

prophetic consciousness was overshadowed by the awful problem of possible moral justification for the people whose transgression had been visited with the divine displeasure.

The history presents a double endeavor to find the answer to this question of the destiny of a sinful people. The altars smoked with sacrifices, and the prophets preached repentance. The religion of Israel, on its legal side, sought for justification through the development of the sacrificial system; on its more spiritual side it sought for justification through the prophetic teaching of moral purification, reliance on the divine mercy, and the promise of the Messianic kingdom. Religion in Israel thus gained, through the working of one and the same moral demand for the expiation of sin, both a priestly ritual and a prophetic ethic; it won a complete system of outward sacrifices, and a clear doctrine of inward purification; it came down to our Lord's time with an established order of fasts and offerings, and also a devout expectation of a Messiah who should redeem his people.

4. The incompleteness of this legal stage of man's moral history is evident at a glance. Not all the elements in man's moral being have come to full growth in this period, nor are the several factors in his life as yet reconciled to each other. Discord prevails within the moral consciousness. The moral forces in human nature are at cross-purposes, and no perfect work is accomplished. Even the principle of obedience, which is the formative principle of this era of moral life under the commandment, carries in itself no evidence of moral finality. It is a principle of moral struggle and attainment rather than a principle of moral possession and repose. Obedience is the way of life, not the end — a walking in the right way, not the reaching the true goal of life. Conscience, reigning as law, is not the final and full moral perfection of man.

This would hold true even in a normal moral development unbroken by sin. The law is the way to life, not the life. Morality in its highest conceivable perfection is right relationship of personal life. It cannot be realized, therefore, merely through a subjection of the will to

authority; the perfect life is to be found only in the free communion of persons who realize together the moral good. Hence conscience, as a law of right commanding in the fear of punishment, is not the highest conceivable moral attainment; — "Perfect love casteth out fear."[1]

If it be true that even in a normally conceived moral development, unbroken by the entrance of sin, the legal stage is but a half-way house on the path to man's final moral destination, still more obvious is it that, after sin has entered, man cannot stop and live forever in this arrested and incomplete state of conscientiousness. Conscience, as law without promise, becomes a law of death. Conscientiousness, as the ruling principle of life, reaches forward to a certain strength and firmness of virtuous principle, and then stops; it has no power to carry the moral character further or higher; it will leave the virtue loveless and without sweetness, unless some other and more gracious principle of life appears to lift it to a better development. Persons who are simply and solely conscientious men, are arrested moral growths. They stand often along the ways of life like strong and sturdy trunks of trees in winter, without leafiness or fragrance, without sap flowing from their roots or fruit on their branches. They need a summer's sunshine and quickening. The moral life cannot remain in its legal elements, and yet grow to its perfection from the single principle of obedience. The servant is not the friend. Still less is the servant who has been found wanting and put under discipline or on probation, as the son who has the freedom of the house. All moral systems, therefore, which begin and end with law and its moral principle of obedience, are insufficient, and correspond only to a temporary or intermediate state of moral development, — a state which would be one of hopeless arrest and final paralysis, were there no escape from it after sin has once made it a state of condemnation. Such systems of the law contain no power, and open no prospects, for the realization of the moral ideal, and the existence, some happy day, on earth as in heaven,

[1] 1 John iv. 18.

of the perfect moral communion and life. Kant's ethic of the categorical imperative belongs to this legal and passing stage of ethical progress; grand as it is in its fidelity to the truth of man's moral consciousness under the supreme imperative of duty, it has not heard and rejoiced in the deeper and holier prophecy of the human conscience which speaks of mercy and atonement, and from which proceeded, through all the ages of the law, the ethical hope of the Messiah and his kingdom of moral redemption.

III. THE CHRISTIAN ERA OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

The changed moral environment of man's spirit, as well as the beginning of modern history, dates from the birth of Jesus Christ.

This new dispensation may be divided into two eras, the one dating from the birth of Christ, and ending with his finished personal work in the ascension; and the other beginning with Pentecost, continuing through this latter age of the Holy Spirit, and destined to come to its period in the second coming of Christ. The central and illuminative truth of this whole dispensation is the Incarnation.

The doctrine of the incarnation — its nature so far as it may be rationally apprehended — its method, so far as successive degrees, or stadia in a process of divine incarnation in the birth and through the life of the man Jesus may be distinguished and traced — and the consummation of it in the final deliverance of the kingdom of the Son to the Father, that God may be all and in all — belongs properly to Christian dogmatics, and does not fall immediately within the province of Christian ethics. Nevertheless, our ethics must take from theology the Christian pre-suppositions of the moral consciousness as it is found, developed or prophetic, in the existing Christian world. Moreover, theology finds its truth of God in Christ most clearly revealed, and more easily apprehensible along ethical lines and in the moral contents of its knowledge of God.[1]

[1] The Trinity is ethically rather than metaphysically revealed in Christ's words concerning the love of the Father and the Son in John's Gospel; yet the ethical unity must have its metaphysical ground.

Hence, keeping closely to the ethical significance of this first truth of Christian theology, we have to contemplate it, so far as it can be morally known, and to interpret it in its special relations to the growth of the moral consciousness of man. Since the presence of Christ has changed the moral environment of conscience, and put man's spirit into a new ethical relation to God; since it has lifted conscience to a higher sphere and set it free in a life-giving atmosphere; the incarnation has become an ethical truth of supreme significance in the moral history of the world.[1]

1. The Word was the moral promise and potency of pre-Christian history.

In one of the most forceful and remarkable of St. Paul's arguments with the Jews he held that before the giving of the law was the promise, and that the promise which was before the law, and independent of the law, could not possibly have been superseded by the entrance of the law.[2] The law intervenes, does its work, and leads up to the promise in its Christian fulfilment. In Paul's Christian theology he recognized as an historic fact of grace that there was a Christian promise of God before the law, which, continuing unabrogated by the law, came to fulfilment in the passing away of the law.

This Pauline view of pre-Christian promise and grace is in accordance with all our knowledge of the moral and spiritual powers which were working in the world before the manifest appearing of Christ. There was from the beginning a potentiality for the Christ in the nature of man. There was a latency of the Spirit of Christ in the teachings of Isaiah and the prophets. The Word, as the early Christian apologist maintained, was in the world before he was in Christ.[3] The fathers did not err when they discovered in the higher moral expressions of heathendom the seeds of the Word which was made flesh. The continuity of man's moral development on the divine side of it re-

[1] We do not give below the dogmatic definitions of the faith of the church in the incarnation. For these, among recent books, see Gore, *The Incarnation of the Son of God.*

[2] Gal. iii.; Rom. iv.

[3] Justin Martyr, *Apol.* i. 46; ii. 13.

quires and justifies this view of the pre-Christian working of the Logos. For the continuity of nature and of the history of man is both supernatural and natural, — an unbrokenness of life and power both on the earthly and the heavenly, the human and the divine side of its unfolding. Two threads are woven together throughout from the beginning of creation to the end, — the one is the divine causation, and the other is the law of evolution: conceive the continuity to be broken in either cord, on the supernatural or the natural side, the gracious or the human, and the whole process of the creation and its history becomes confused, the ascent of life is rendered unintelligible, and everything, above and below, grows confused, meaningless, discordant. The unity of life and history, for which all science seeks, lies in the continuity of the divine as well as the earthly. Hence we must suppose that the life and the Spirit of the Christ had their pre-Christian presence and potentiality, — as the sun, which fills our day with light, had its pre-solar latency and promise in the luminousness of the nebula before ever the worlds were formed.

This general truth of the ethical indwelling of the Christ in humanity before the Word was made flesh, which was early recognized by some of the Church fathers, has been more definitely conceived and more powerfully apprehended by many modern thinkers. It is a familiar conception in German theology, and it has had much to do with the most fruitful theological thinking in England of late years.

2. We meet in modern theology the frequent assertions that Christ exists as the root of our humanity;[1] that there is an essential indwelling of Christ in humanity; that the Christ in some vital sense is in every man. When analyzed and thought out, especially on the ethical side, these assertions will be seen to involve these more specific ideas: (1) There is in human nature a capacity for the Christ, or a capacity for some divine incarnation. The creation in the divine thought of it never was a Christless creation. In the same divine thought in which from eternity the

[1] Rev. xxii. 16.

world exists, Christ is also thought of as the fulfilment of it, and as the complete realization of the divine wisdom and love which goes out in creation. The divine idea of creation from eternity is the idea of a creation for Christ, and to be fulfilled in Christ.[1] Any other or inferior idea of creation would be unworthy of God, and not the best possible idea of creation. A Christless creation — a creation not capable of the Christ — would not be the most perfect creation of which God could think. For it would be a creation without a head, a broken work, an incompleted thought, a word half-spoken, a gift of God not unto the uttermost. Therefore, as a moral work, expressive of the moral being of the perfect One, the creation is to be regarded as made for Christ, and as having its fulfilment in the incarnation; God's idea of a moral creation is finished not in Adam, but in the second man, who is of heaven.[2] Hence the possibility of incarnation in the creation is to be regarded as one of the first moral truths of its nature and end.

Corresponding to this *a priori* deduction of the promise and the capacity of the creation for Christ, is the *a posteriori* induction to be derived from the progressiveness of the creation and the ascent of life up through types of increasing receptivity for higher gifts, until the moral nature of man is attained, and his history brought to its supreme hour in the person of the Son of man. The observed ascent of life, as it is now recognized in our science of the creation, from the rudest material beginnings up through gradual refinements and spiritualizations almost of matter to the intelligent brain of man, and his ethical capacity for becoming a soul in the divine image, — this is throughout a prophetic promise, and, at the same time, an increasing historic realization, of the Christ-idea of the creation from eternity. The Scripture expresses this relation to Christ of the creative idea when it speaks of the eternal purpose of God in Jesus Christ.[3]

(2) This truth contains also the implication that there

[1] Col. ii. 15–17. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 47.

[3] This aspect of the incarnation the author has treated more fully in his *Old Faiths in New Light*, chs. v. and vi.

is a kinship in Christ, or natural unity with Christ, in every man. This Christ-kinship is part of man's God-likeness. Every man may be said to be naturally a Christian so far as in his nature there exists a capacity to become Christlike. Every man has something in him by nature which relates him to Christ, which makes it possible for him to become a brother of the Lord. For Christ in his God-filled humanity brings to perfect fruition powers of being, capacities of nature, signs and prophecies of God's intention in man, which belong to our common human nature, and in which we individually all have part and share by our birthright in our Father's home as children of God. The Christ is the perfect and eternal sonship of humanity from God, in virtue of which we all are brethren.

This capacity for Christ, however, which belongs to man's original nature, and which is involved in the divine idea from eternity of a moral creation, is not of itself the actuality of it, not the realization of the Christ among men. Neither is the Christ when he comes merely the product of the human nature which is made for Christ. The capacity in man for Christ is a receptive principle, not a productive power. Humanity can receive, but it cannot make its own Christ. Both the original human receptivity and the final realization of the original Christ-idea of man proceed alike from God. The Christ comes naturally, in accordance, that is, with the natural preparation of man's constitution for him; yet supernaturally also, in accordance, that is, with the self-imparting power of God. The Christ is thus both the completion of humanity, and the highest impartation of the divine love. He is the incarnation of God in humanity according to the capacity of human nature, in God's eternal idea of it, to receive the image of God. The whole divine idea of humanity as the Son of God's love, which idea exists potentially and as capacity to receive God in all men, is brought to its divine fulfilment, and is realized once for all in the second man, the Lord from heaven.

3. We may further view the incarnation as the realiza-

tion in space and time of God's eternal humanness. If our nature is in God's image, then there exists likewise in God himself something eternally corresponding to, and originative of, the human nature. There must be an eternal human archetype in God's own nature. We may speak, therefore, reverently yet truly of the eternal humanness of God. He is the Father of spirits; and as the son has the image of the father, so likewise the Divine Father may find His nature in His children. This essential and eternal humanness of God is realized under temporal conditions, as in no other way so completely, in the person of the Son of his love. The person of Christ is the objectifying of the eternal Christ-side (the humanness) of God's nature. This is more than a manifestation of it; it is a *realization* of it in time and space. God in the historical Christ is God objectified, making himself an object of apprehension and communion within the limitations of time and space. That which in the Godhead is His interior glory, beyond all time, and uncommunicated, becomes through the incarnation and in Christ the communicated, manifested glory of God — His impartation of Himself, through the eternal Word, for finite communion, under finite conditions, and in a form apprehensible by men. God in Christ is God making himself the definite, historical object of human knowledge, approach, and communion.[1]

4. The ethical significance of the incarnation, as thus apprehended in our theology, remains now to be made apparent.

(1) It enables God on His part to be more to the moral creation. God in Christ is more to us than God before Christ, or without Christ, could be. The divine environment of man's spirit becomes through Christ a closer and more luminous communion of God with man. The incarnation consequently has worth to God himself as it enables Him to be more to His moral creation. To a man born in Adam's day God existed as the Creator or infinite Father; to a man born in Isaiah's day God was all that God in the history of creation and revelation up to that time could

[1] See Gore, *The Incarnation*, p. 175.

be. To neither had the Lord become historically all that God can be to man; for the ways of access and contact between God and man had not all been opened, and there was much in the Godhead which human nature is made capable of receiving, which had not then been historically brought nigh, and which yet waited to be revealed. To a man living now God may be all that God in history has become through the presence of Christ and in the power of his Spirit. In the ascended Christ, through the Logos who has been made flesh, and who ever lives at the right hand of the Majesty on high, God has imparted Himself to the whole moral universe in the fulness of His love and with an absolute communication of Himself, beyond which we can conceive of no higher kind of revelation. It is God's most *personal* revelation of Himself; and greater love than to give his own life, hath no man. Consequently in the ascended and glorified Lord, God is and shall be in the ages of ages more to men than God was, or could have been, without Christ.

(2) This mode of thinking discovers a cosmical moral significance in the incarnation. God realizing in any world his eternal humanness in Christ, is God thereby existing in fuller self-impartation and in more intimate communion with all finite moral beings. The difficulties in this conception, like all the difficulties in our idea of God, are more metaphysical than ethical. Leaving for the moment out of mind any endeavor to construe the metaphysics of God's self-impartation under finite conditions, and looking solely at the ethical side of it, we shall not find it impossible to conceive that Love will give of itself to the utmost; that the eternal Love, which is God, will not be self-satisfied until it has communicated itself through the utmost possible realization of itself in the same creation which proceeds from its own infinite heart. Thus the incarnation, ethically conceived, becomes the last word of creative Love. There can be no end of Love's creative speech until that last word is spoken.

(3) We receive, consequently, through the incarnation, an enhanced ethical environment of life. Man is put upon

a new and higher plane of ethical motive and aspiration in God's Christian era of the creation. The power of the Holy Ghost is greater insistence of God in men's lives than was possible under the previous conditions of revelation. Historical Christianity, on the ethical side of it, is increased divine motive-power for men. Those who are born in this era of grace, those who are brought within the knowledge of historical Christianity, are born on a higher plane of revelation, are subjected to an approach of divine influence more intimate and more efficient than was permitted to men who lived under previous dispensations. Hence to the moral life of man in the presence of Christianity are brought new inspirations; humanity is touched by the divinest motives. We shall have occasion to observe the enhanced motivation of human life under this latter realization of God in humanity through Christ, as we shall pass to the consideration of the Christian virtues and duties. A single illustration at this point of the higher ethical power of human life under the gospel, may be drawn from the deepened conception of sin which accompanies the knowledge of Christ among men.

The Christian sense of sin brings out elements of it, which were latent in the nature-stage of moral life, and which were but darkly apprehended in the legal period. Particularly is this true of the sense of personal unworthiness, and personal want of fidelity to God, which we find characterizing the Christian conviction of sin. The prodigal comes to himself as an ingrate who has left his Father's house. Sin, in the Christian consciousness of it, is felt keenly and pathetically as personal wrong against a personal love. It is unbelief in Christ who is the express image of the Father's person. It is sin not merely against law, and exposed therefore to the penalty of law; it is wrong done against God, and in its rejection of divine grace a grieving the Holy Spirit. That a higher ethical plane has been reached in the Christian sense of sin is evident from the typical instance of Peter's betrayal of the Lord, and his bitter self-condemnation. We read, "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter." The eye of Jesus, fixed

on Peter, convinced him of his sin. "And Peter remembered, . . . And he went out, and wept bitterly."[1] Such is the Christian consciousness of the personal treachery and shame of sin.

(4) This changed ethical relation of God in His world through Christ may be more fully described by the Scriptural word, reconciliation.[2] Without raising any theological question which this word has suggested, we notice that the world with Christ in it had become a new world to the apostle who had before been bound to sin, under the law, as to a body of death. He had entered into a divine reconciliation in which old things passed away, and all things were become new. It was not merely a change in his own habit of mind, but the world itself, since he knew that God was in Christ, reconciling it to himself, had become to his faith altogether a new and brighter world. His whole moral atmosphere was changed, and he lived in another element of life. There was a time when God seemed almost his enemy; or, if not his enemy, at least a hard Taskmaster, requiring duties he could not perform, and demanding a righteousness in which he could not be made perfect. But now old things are passed away. God exists as no man's enemy. His God is his soul's eternal Friend. The world to him is under a changed sky. His life has entered, as across a bleak Alpine pass, a sunny clime; all things are become new; God is in His world, holy still as the eternal light, and yet as the very sunshine and joy of earth, the glow of its beauty and the richness of its vines and fruitfulness. So great, so morally great, was the change of the whole aspect of life to St. Paul after he knew God's reconciliation in Christ. In the Christian age the world is known henceforth as the redeemed world. We are born no more under the curse of sin only, and subject to the law, but also we are born under the promise and to the grace of God's redeeming love and presence. The facts of life have changed, and with them consequently certain moral relations of human life. As men belonging to a humanity which is redeemed in Christ, we are no lon-

[1] Luke xxii. 61–62. [2] Cor. v. 18.

ger lost, but we are found. In Christ our humanity is as the sheep that was lost, but is found. It is the restored prodigal, the forgiven child of God, the servant called now as the son to a new obedience and a better service. As individual men having part in this humanity which has the Christ in it, we are so far forth already forgiven sons of God. Personally, individually, we have to make our own that confession of sin which has been made for man in the sufferings and death of Christ; and we are to claim our part also in that divine forgiveness which has been received for humanity by the Son of man; but inasmuch as we partake in our human nature of that humanity which exists in Christ always before God, we are in a Christian relation, we are under a gracious privilege which would not exist for us without Christ, and in which, as men born with sinful natures and to an inheritance of evil, we do not stand. Since God's assumption of our human nature in Christ the distinguishing moral feature of our divine environment is God's reconciliation to us, — this is the age of grace.

From this review of the nature of man's Christian environment, we pass next to the question, What is the principle of moral appropriation in this stage of development?

5. The moral principle which corresponds to the third era of man's ethical development is denoted by the general word, faith.

The further nature of this principle, what it denotes. what it comprehends, may be determined both *a priori*, and *a posteriori;* both from a study of the nature of the era to which the appropriating principle of life must correspond, and from observation of the moral life of men in their actual appropriation of the Christian materials of life.

The Christian principle of appropriation, accordingly, may be determined first from the nature of the good to be appropriated in the following manner: —

(1) It is a receptive principle. There is a new moral condition to be accepted. We have not to change our own moral surrounding, to create for ourselves a new and better atmosphere for truer moral life. Divine grace has

already created the further moral conditions necessary to the advance of moral life. The atmosphere which we breathe is already Christian. We are not living as in some carboniferous age, the heavy-laden air of which could be vitalized only in coarse and uncouth forms of vegetation; the moral atmosphere of these Christian days is the vitalizing, sunny power of the gospel. We are not to seek for the love of God as something unrealized as yet; we are to keep ourselves in the love of God.[1] This Christian exhortation could be freely given in the latter world-age of the Holy Ghost; for it represents in a single word the larger and higher Christian possibility of life. It reminds us of the Christian truth that God is always around us in his life-giving love; that we have but to keep ourselves in it, and let it renew and invigorate us, as the clear air and the sunshine will give health, and color, and pulsing life. We have not to create our spirit's atmosphere of life, but simply to breathe it. The love of God is here and now, and everywhere around us; keep yourselves in it.

(2) The principle of reception must be like the object to be received. The method of appropriation will be fitted to the good to be appropriated. This is a general law of receptivity. The appropriating organ must have some adaptation, or exist in some relation of fitness, to the element to be taken up into the life — as the lungs are tissues suited to the action of the air, the eye is a pure crystalline lense for the light to shine through, and the ear is adjusted to the waves of sound. Analogously, in the moral world, the principle by which any ethical good is to be made ours must be adapted to the grace which waits to be taken up into our life.

Now the good to be received in this Christian age of man's moral history, as we have seen (p. 100), is pre-eminently a personal good. The gift of God in Christ is directly and essentially a personal gift. God gives through Christ, not further works of creation, not richer fruits and fairer flowers, not a splendid constellation in the

[1] Jude 21.

skies, no new *things* however rich or resplendent; God gives *Himself* — His personal favor, presence, and welcome — His personal influence and atmosphere of life, light, and grace. The moral advance in the ethical environment has been all along from the less to the moro and more personal manifestation and self-impartation of God. The progress in the moral development of history so far as it relates to the external conditions, or the divine preparation of the moral means and motives for our best ethical life, has been from nature to law, from law to grace, from the visible works and presence of Christ on earth to the perpetual presence and universal dispensation of the Holy Spirit. This progress of divine revelation has likewise been a progress from without inwards; from revelations more external to communication of divine truth more inward and spiritual; from the divine transcendence to the divine immanence; from the potential Christ — the theophanies of the Old Testament — to the historic Christ, and afterwards to the Spirit of Christ in the souls of believers. We may learn to live not only in subjection to the Father of our spirits, but in the communion of the Holy Ghost. The principle of moral receptivity, therefore, must pass through a corresponding change; and on this Christian plane obedience will give place to the spirit of high and reverent comradeship with the Master; the servant will become the friend; the son in the freedom of the spirit will do the Father's will. Hence the Christian principle of appropriating faith is simply and thoroughly a principle of personal trust and fellowship.

(3) This receptive principle of the Christian age — faith — may be still further studied as the characteristic attitude of the whole Christian personality in its relation to the entire spiritual good which is brought within its reach in Christ.

In this personal receptivity of the Christian good the following elements may be discriminated. (*a*) Because personal, it is an active and free reception of the offered good. It is not a merely passive receptivity, but an active appropriation of divine grace. There is in it a certain

passivity, indeed, of spirit, — that silencing of opposing desires, and quietness of soul which may be described as waiting upon God. But such waiting on God implies a free and firm holding of one's soul, in a receptive attitude, up to the light which shines for us. Personal receptivity of mind or heart is not to be confounded with passivity like that of a photographic plate which is exposed to the light. Below the line of freedom, beneath the power of personality, all receptivity of nature is and must be simply reaction. Things receive without prior action; having received they react according to their natures. But reaction is not exactly appropriation — not ethical assimilation. The sunshine may set free certain chemical energies in a leaf; and the energy of the light will be conserved in the motions which its falling on the combination of forces locked together in the leaf may have produced. The leaf is passive until touched by the sunbeam; the forces within the leaf are held in equilibrium until the impact of some other force sets them free; everything is mechanical and consecutive; there is no free outgoing of energy, no meeting of power from without by the upspringing of power from within. Nature below the line of freedom is in equilibrium or motion, but it manifests no spontaneous and free receptivity. That is spiritual, and belongs to the spiritual order. Freedom carries nature above the dead line of passivity. On the ascending scale of life nature above the line of freedom becomes capable of active receptivity, that is, of moral appropriation. Will, entering into nature, holds man up as a self-moved reagent among the forces that play upon him. Influences from all quarters will gather around the moral agent. They may enter at times unawares into the life of man, and seem to remain long as latent materials to be afterwards developed in the conscious determinations of character. The mental receptivity of the child appears at first to be a mere gathering of outward impressions, only minor degrees of personal activity being noticeable in momentary attention or the beginnings of reflection. But outward influences never enter vitally and become essential part of the personal character, until they

have been actively received, and freely assimilated through the willing mind. Character is the fixed, yet advancing line which is drawn by free will across the wild land or debatable ground of nature. It marks what has been made one's personal property, and each man has to possess himself of his character. By no exercise of power can God Himself make any man good, as the air can be rendered healthful by the force of the winds blowing through it. God can make no human heart pure as he can make the sky clear, simply by pouring a morning's sunshine into it. The door must be opened from within to the Spirit; the heart must turn itself to the light which waits to shine into it. Human freedom is a capacity of moral receptivity which God has set as a limit to his own almightiness.

(*b*) This personal receptivity is not only a free act, but it must also be a determination of the whole personality. All the personal powers must meet and act together as one will in the personal reception of divine grace. The whole sphere of personal being is to be held up to the light as one lens, so that the light from above may be focused upon it. The receptive Christian will, therefore, is not mere will, but the will which is expressive of, and which carries with it, the whole being in all its experience of life. It is a rational will, and it is also the will of the heart. In faith the entire manhood stands receptive before God. The whole of man is presented for the action upon it of the Divine Spirit in view of the whole revelation of God. Faith is man's entire nature put into normal relation, and abiding in its right position toward the truth for which it was made, the knowledge of which is eternal life. Faith is man, with all his mind and heart and strength, saying "Yes," to God saying, "I am."

(*c*) In this receptivity of the whole being of man to God, which is the vital principle of the Christian life, it is not, however, implied that there is necessarily an entire absence of contradictory impulse, or refractory desire. For this receptive attitude is the resultant of all the forces and experiences of the Christian life; and in the supreme personal choice other and lower disputant desires and volitions

may be co-ordinated or suppressed. Perfect moral unanimity is the privilege of sinless beings, not the attainment of characters now struggling up into virtue and godlikeness.

(*d*) Neither is this Christian receptivity as yet perfect or complete in its extension; it is still an elementary and growing union of the soul of man with the Spirit of God. Christ may be really, though not fully formed within us. The Spirit without measure was given only to the One who always did the Father's will. Degrees and variations in the appropriation of the moral good may be admitted without denial or impairment of the receptive act as an act of the person in his moral wholeness, or personal integrity of being. It is conceivable that a participation in the highest good which is perfect in kind, may be always incomplete in its extension; that an angel of God may receive more light as he gains enhanced power of vision; that when the heart of God's servant is enlarged, he may run the way of His commandments.[1] The two are correlate factors, — an enlarging heart and an increasing revelation. For still stronger reasons in a sinful world must it hold true that the initial reception of the true life which is light, may be limited in extent and imperfect in degree. Now a clouded earth may turn to the dawn. The clear sky, and atmosphere all flooded with light, may be the gift only of the evening-time.

(*e*) This life of faith, which we hold to be the response of a man's whole being to the Christian revelation of God, but which may exist at first in limited measures and imperfect apprehensions, will consequently prove to be an increasing capacity of man to receive the divine grace. Progress is the sign of its moral integrity; growth is the evidence of its original vitality. The true life reaches forward towards perfection. It tends to fuller and richer adaptations of all man's faculties and activities to his spiritual environment. Faith is the continuous endeavor of a soul to live up to the possibilities of its divine environment. It is the increasing answer of a life to the Life. Apart from the growth of the saints there can be no perseverance of the saints.

[1] Ps. cxix. 32.

We have thus far been describing the nature of faith, or the Christian principle of moral appropriation, so far as it may be determined *a priori* from the conditions of the moral epoch of grace in which, since the Incarnation, man's spirit exists.

We have next to determine further this principle — its nature, method, and laws — *a posteriori;* to observe how far Christian experience answers to these general *a priori* forms of it; and to fill these up with more definite Christian contents.

The principle of Christian appropriation (moral personal receptivity) may be determined, secondly, as follows from Christian experience.

(1) According to the gospels the relation of the first disciples to Jesus seems to have been one of simple personal trust. They followed him. They recognized in him the Master, and they had confidence in him. They did not at first understand many of his sayings, they did not know what he might do next, or whither he would go; but they followed him unhesitatingly because he had commanded their minds and won their hearts. Nothing could be simpler, or more complete than the trust which the disciples gave to the Master whose person at once attracted, held, and commanded them. So entire was their personal devotion that even Thomas who could hardly believe in the first reports of the resurrection had said, when the Master was hastening to his hour of danger and death, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." [1]

(2) In the fourth gospel this primal principle of Christian trust appears somewhat expanded and enriched. John was among the first who trusted in Jesus; and then he had gradually entered through his personal sympathy with the Master into deeper knowledge of the Spirit of Christ. His faith remains a simple personal trust in the Lord, but it is a trust which has in it more spiritual discernment. St. John's faith is not only confidence in Christ, but also a dawning knowledge of the Son of God. It is a trust which creates insight, reaches unto knowledge, possesses

[1] John xi. 16.

light, and rests in the truth of the Word that was with God. It is a trust which develops and clarifies itself into definite and firm beliefs. It is a personal trust also which ripens into love. The Lord, who has been trusted, is loved with an increasing purity and ardor, and through the love his truth is more and more revealed to the faith.[1]

(3) When we trace the development of this personal principle of receptivity from the gospels into the epistles, we are at once struck with the somewhat changed and very vigorous meaning which the Christian word faith assumes in the experience and letters of St. Paul. It is still indeed with Paul, as with the first disciples, a personal trust. By faith he is made one with his Lord. But faith with St. Paul is no longer simply a receptive relation of the soul towards Christ; it becomes further a justifying principle for the believer. The truth is emphasized that in this relation of personal trust there is and can be no lingering element of condemnation. Where there is faith in Christ there can be no more condemnation. Paul's moral experience under the law led him to accentuate this side of the relationship between the believer and God, and to become deeply conscious of the moral justification which is gained in the life of faith in Christ. Faith is apprehended in its contrast with painful and imperfect and slavish obedience, even as Christ is seen in his divine grace in contrast with the law. Yet this faith, which by virtue of its confidence in Christ proves itself to be a principle of justification, contains also germinantly in its trust the power of a new and better obedience. It works by love.[2] It is a faith which first assumes that righteousness is already imputed to the sinner for Christ's sake, or that God will look with new favor upon him as he begins to live anew in following Christ; and then a faith also which, on the ground of this first trustful assumption of free grace, makes actual righteousness possible in the further working out of the moral character. In this new, personal relationship to

[1] This is true of the growth of the faith of the other disciples, but it is preeminently true of the beloved disciple.

[2] Gal. v. 6.

Christ the weight which prevented the upspringing of true, free life is removed from man's heart, and at once the power is imparted which is able to raise up the new, fruitful life. The stone once taken away, the moral nature, responsive to the warmth of the divine love, can break through its earthly corruption and spring up and grow to strong, rich moral life and fruitfulness.

(4) The other apostles, while still abiding in the original principle of the Christian life as a personal trust in Christ, give to that principle varying and special expression according to their several individualities and particular training and calling.

Thus St. James, who still loves the temple, and lingers until he dies in its sacred shadows, naturally finds the Christian principle of appropriation to be a new law of life. The disciple's relation to Christ as Master and Lord yields for him a new and better law of life. The legalism of Judaism is indeed overcome in the fundamental Christian principle of trust; but in the Epistle of St. James the legal conception of life still modifies the form and sets the cast of the new life of Christian faith. To Peter faith holds in itself the secret of justification, and also renews the heart; but to Peter, who was the first of the disciples called with John to endure persecution for the Master, and who suffered in his name, faith becomes especially a source and sustaining power of hope. The believer's hope is almost the predominant note of Peter's experience as it is disclosed in his epistle.

These several biblical elements may easily be combined in a general description of the principle of moral receptivity which fits the new Christian environment. Faith, the peculiar principle of moral appropriation in the Christian dispensation, is seen to be, in its simple and vital root, a personal trust. It consists in receiving the influence and power of a person, even the Christ. But this original personal trust proves to be a fruitful moral relation. It is new-creative of character. It reforms the conduct of life. It opens the understanding to truth. It quickens the spiritual imagination. It lends earnestness to the reason.

It contains the peace of justification. It brings the life into the freedom of the law of the Spirit. Faith in its increasing power gives to men spiritual mastery over their passions; it enlightens, justifies, makes righteous; it opens free course to love, and possesses the cheerful expectation of the new heavens and the new earth. In one word, the Christian faith becomes within the soul the new creative principle of the Christian personality.

6. The relation of this Christian principle of faith towards other elements and powers of our nature remains to be determined.

The psychological place and right of Christian faith are to be studied and defined, for Christian ethics should not fail to approve its fundamental principles under the tests of modern psychology. At this point, therefore, in our discussion, philosophical ethics have the right to interpose, and to demand that the faith-principle of Christian ethics justify itself at the bar of psychological judgment.

The philosophical interpolation at this point relates to the four following inquiries: (1) Is there right or authority in human nature for this faith-principle which is acknowledged to be the formative principle of Christian ethics? (2) If so, what is the standing and validity of it in relation to other elements of psychology? (3) How is the principle of faith specially modified or intensified in the Christian development of it? (4) Does the Christian use of this principle, and the increased strain put upon it in the Christian reliance on it, reveal any weakness or flaw in the faith-principle?

The first two of these inquiries belong primarily to psychology, and can be considered briefly and summarily in this volume, only so far as it may be necessary for us to indicate still more definitely than we have already done, certain philosophical postulates of our ethics. The third question is a distinctly ethical question, which should therefore find its proper place in Christian ethics. The fourth part of this philosophical interpolation we may conveniently reserve until the closing chapter on the moral motive power.

§ 1. THE AUTHORITY OF THE PRINCIPLE OF FAITH

We have assumed, as a philosophical postulate for ethics, the objectivity of knowledge. With regard to the external material world — the world impinging on our consciousness through our senses — we draw from philosophy the assumption of its reality as something distinct from and independent of our thought. Our sense-perceptions do not mislead us. Our receptivity to the influences of external nature is a true receptivity; we receive the impressions of a nature which in its phenomena is external to us, and is not created by the thought in which these outward forms are held. Mind is true mirror of nature. Something from without is reflected within. Our fundamental faith in the integrity of our consciousness at once of ourselves and of the world external to ourselves, is a faith not really to be denied, however speculatively it may be played with by the philosophers. It is a faith fundamental to all rational thought. This first affirmation of being in two kinds — self and not self — is, as it were, the original and repeated sacrament of conscious intelligence, and in neither kind can the elements of it be rightfully withdrawn from humanity.

Similarly, and for the same reasons, we have assumed as a philosophical postulate the objectivity of the moral truth of things. There is moral reality corresponding to our moral feeling-perception, as there is physical actuality corresponding to our sense-perception.[1] The final metaphysics is moral as well as physical. The universe has some moral reality at its ultimate metaphysical base. Our faith is as valid in trusting the witness to the moral reality which lies at the ground of all things, as it is in receiving the witness to the existence, independently of our thought, of the physical objectivity of the world. If a subjective idealism is to be rationally excluded from physics, equally is it to be excluded from ethics. But if realism is sound philosophy, it is also sound ethics. Or, if in regard to the objectivity of the external world, the last word of phi-

[1] See above, p. 145.

losophy seeks to unite idealism and realism, and we are led to put confidence in a creation which has objectivity as a realized idea to the Eternal Mind, and hence reality to all finite minds thinking God's thought after Him; equally cogent must be our conclusion that an ideal realism holds true also in ethics; that the ideal good to be chosen and obeyed by us has in itself objectivity to the Eternal conscience which sees in it the moral nature of God; and hence it has immutable reality also to all moral intelligences who are made in the image of God, and who reflect in themselves His nature of righteousness. True psychology yields both these postulates of knowledge. We are not maintaining that there is a special faculty for the reception of moral truth, which is to be distinguished from other powers of the mind; as we need not hold that there is a particular faculty of knowing the external world to be distinguished from other powers of the mind; we are affirming that the whole being of man, as a rational and spiritual intelligence, is organized for knowledge, — for true, though confessedly partial, knowledge of reality; that alike towards the heavens and the earth, on the side of his being which is in contact with external nature, and on the side of his being in contact with eternal right, man is organized for knowledge of the truth, and has some reasonable and authoritative conviction and faith.

We are maintaining, as our philosophical ethics, that the eternal Being, from whose continuous causation the worlds have their phenomenal existence, is also the moral Being, — in Himself the realization of the Good, — from whose nature of absolute righteousness the moral laws of the spiritual world perpetually proceed; and consequently the impression which man actually has received from the beginning, and which is borne in upon him with increasing insistence during the moral unfolding of his life, that there is a "Power not ourselves which makes for righteousness," is an impression of the truth, so that faith in it is the first confidence and the supreme duty of all rational intelligence.

"What is real," Hegel used to say, "is rational, and what is rational, is real." Yet that famous dictum was but the half of the truth of the universe. What is real is also ethical; and the ethical in the last analysis of life belongs also to the real and the eternal. The reality of things, the being of God, is alike rational and moral. Metaphysics in its ultimate secret of being is also ethics. The final ground of being is moral as well as rational. Can we conceive any being as having eternal existence unless at the same time we conceive of it as having some moral being? Can anything endure forever without moral will or character? Eternal life is in the good. The evil is eternal death. What that death may be for a spirit supposed to have sinned beyond possibility of repentance, we do not know: how speculatively it is to be conceived, is a question for dogmatics beyond our present province. Were we to pursue these assertions further in the realm of psychology and philosophy, it would be necessary to pass in review successive forms of theories of knowledge which have appeared since Kant; we should be obliged also to test and to justify these philosophical assumptions of ethical reality at the root of things in the light of recent researches into physiological psychology. But the detailed argumentation of this philosophical postulate of our ethics would carry us beyond our present limits. The further vindication of it belongs to psychology; and the materials for a new psychology, at once simpler and more comprehensive of the physical conditions and the spiritual realities of experience, are being gathered and await organization by some competent hand.

§ 2. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL VALIDITY OF FAITH

The answer to the second interposition has already been given implicitly in the statement just made in reply to the first question. The faith-principle, in its witness to the objectivity of our knowledge, alike for our rational and moral intelligence, is to be regarded as possessing validity equal to that of any other factors of our self-consciousness. If we accept any testimony as credible; if we admit any psychological surety for logic; we cannot invalidate this first capacity of our intelligence. This moral trust in the operations of our minds must be accepted with a child's confidence, or all our reasonings will fall apart. Without this trust we cannot walk together along any way of reasoning or path of scientific investigation. There is and can be, in short, nothing in any of the later, additional deliverances of our consciousness to invalidate this first witness of mind to itself, to the external world, and to the moral order which it finds continually impressed upon itself.

§ 3. THE DISTINCTIVE CHRISTIAN USE OF THE PRINCIPLE OF FAITH

In answer to the third inquiry we have to consider how far, or in what manner, Christian faith, which is the formative principle of Christian ethics, is to be distinguished from faith in general. One and the same principle of faith, which is fundamental in our being, may take on distinctive characters in our use and application of it to different objects which are apprehended by it. Differences in the nature of the objects to be grasped by faith, may determine differences either in the mode of its exercise or in the intensity of its apprehension of them. In this respect the faith-principle may be compared to a general taste or appetency of our nature. The eye may seize more vividly some colors than others ; the whole spectrum of possible hues may not yet find in the human eye an organ sufficiently etherialized for their discrimination. The appetite of hunger may direct us to those substances which are fitted to serve as food for the body; yet the taste may seize with peculiar avidity upon certain palatable objects, and the vividness as well as the satisfaction of the appetite may vary with the properties of these different foods. Disease, moreover, may vitiate the natural discrimination of the taste ; or make the light darkness, and the darkness as light, to the inflamed eye.

It is important that this possibility of many and great divergencies in the use and application of the same fundamental power of human nature should be clearly recognized ; as otherwise the confused and sometimes even conflicting moral conclusions of men might seem to invalidate the ethical principle itself. Herbert Spenser does not escape this confusion of reasoning. See *Justice*, pp. 271 sq.

Faith in its Christian form and use is to be distinguished from faith in general in these two respects: first, it is faith adapted to, and in its form determined by, its special object: secondly, it is faith distinguished by its moral intensity. Both the object which it apprehends, and the moral power of its relation to that object, cause the faith-principle in Christianity to become faith in the highest.

Hence the word faith is commonly regarded as synonymous with the principle of the Christian religion, as though there were no other exercise of faith, or as though the Christians alone live by faith, and precariously, while the philosophers are permitted to bank safely on sufficient reason. But all reasoning proceeds from faith, and all reasoners make their drafts of logic from the original trust-fund of human nature. Faith is the natural capital of all reasoning. Break down the principle of faith, and logic itself would be bankrupt. Faith in Christ is simply faith in its apprehension of the highest revelation of the ideal good, and also faith in its purest intensity.

1. Christian faith is determined by the adaptation of faith to the Christian Object of it.

(1) The Christian Object of faith is presented as historical: (2) as actually working in the life of the world: (3) as prophetic and still future. We proceed to consider the Christian specialization of faith in these particular relations to it of its Object. While the full treatment of much that we must now pass in rapid review belongs to apologetics, we cannot leave this portion of our subject altogether without notice, because in Christian ethics we affirm the obligation of Christian faith. As Christians, we say, men ought to believe in Christ. Why, then, or in what degree, does faith in this specific Christian Object of it become a duty?

(1) An object of faith, which is historically given, requires faith corresponding to the manner in which such object is presented for acceptance; that manner being historical, that is, through testimony, the particular kind of faith (so far as it is historical), which it requires, can only be assent of the mind to external evidence, or to testimonies which are proper subjects of criticism and verification. Faith in any historical object of belief can rise no higher than this degree of belief as intelligent assent to evidence. Such faith never escapes entirely the limits of probabilism; all historical belief is at best a probable belief, although the degree of probability may rise very high. There will be contained in any historical

belief that general moral constant of faith which is to be found under all its forms and in any degree of its exercise; viz. trust in our own minds and their processes; and also there is a moral variable in the obligation of historical belief; viz. the greater or less probability of the evidence. The moral constant of faith consists here in the general obligation of reason to accept evidence. The variable element lies in the nature of the evidence. The moral obligation of belief, which is absolute in its rational principle, varies in its application to the particular case, as the weight of the evidence rises or falls. On this plane of probability (where all historical beliefs lie), there is truth in the objection which Lessing urged with keen insistence against the unspiritual orthodoxism of his day, that "accidental truths of history can never become the proof of necessary truths of reason."[1] Christian faith should have replied to Lessing's objection, not by flying in the face of his proposition, but by a more careful discrimination of its own successive forms and degrees of obligation. So far as it is only an historical faith, and its object is only historically given, faith does not meet us with the absolute authority of a necessary truth of reason; our obligation of Christian belief is an obligation of assent to the most probable evidence concerning the person and the works of Christ. Historical belief in the historical Christ, however firm, is not spiritual faith in the eternal Word. An ethical faith at this stage, or on this plane, will accept and maintain its duty of biblical criticism, historical investigation, and scholarly appeal to the law and the testimony.

We assume for Christian ethics at this point the probable conclusions of biblical criticism. As the result of the renewed historical study of the origin of Christianity (since Strauss), and the modern microscopic study of the New Testament literature, we are warranted in holding that we have, underlying our present gospels, authentic documents, and testimonies from apostolic sources, by means of which the life of Jesus as his first disciples saw and heard him, and believed in him, is truthfully

[1] *Ueber den Beweis des Geistes und der Kraft.*

declared to us. Not myth or legend, but the personal uniqueness and spiritual originality of Jesus are the explanation of the origin of Christianity. The hour of the Christ was the climax of history. It marks the influx of new spiritual power into the moral life of the world. Much more than this concerning the mysterious divineness and miraculous power of the Christ may be claimed as historically credible; but when we reduce the historical evidence of Christianity to its lowest terms, belief in the wonderful and creative personality of Jesus is the residuum, at least, of belief which cannot be analyzed into any other factors, nor dissolved by the re-agents of biblical criticism into myth. To the evidence of history to the unique person and creative spiritual work of Jesus we give ethical assent.

(2) The Object of Christian faith not only has been historically given, but also is present and living in the life of faith.

Among the most singular, and at first thought scarcely intelligible sayings of Jesus which have come down to us, are his farewell words to the disciples concerning the gift to them of the Spirit after his departure, and his continued real presence with them always to the end of the world in the Spirit, whom he should send to witness of him,[1] to take of the things of Christ and show them unto them. Christianity thus, in the intention and promise of its founder, was to be not merely a record of the Son of God on earth, but a perpetual operation of the Spirit of God from heaven. The Christian dispensation — the Christian environment of life — was to be the presence of the Holy Spirit. Nor was that witness of the Spirit to be communicated only to the first disciples by extraordinary signs, or in transitory, supernatural gifts; it was to become the common element and the daily light of the life of the whole succession and communion of believers until the Lord should again be revealed in his personal visibility. "We believe in the Holy Ghost," is the ancient and the modern confession of Christ's Church. Christian faith, accordingly, has not

[1] John xiv. 26; xvi. 13–15.

only to do with the Jesus of the gospels, but it is something more than assent to the historical Christ; it has further, and still more intimately to do with the presence in the world of the Spirit of Christ. It confesses, therefore, the obligation of spiritual responsiveness to the influence of the Holy Ghost. As the object of present apprehension Christian experience presents a living power for faith to receive. Not only was Christianity the world's spiritual sunrise; it is the light of life now in our skies. Open to our observation in the characters of others, and possible to us in the inward truth of our own lives, are mental and moral experiences which bear witness to the healing and quickening touch of the Spirit of Christ on the spirit which is in man, — experiences which contain within themselves some diviner secret of life, joy, and peace than men had ever known before Christ came in the flesh, or than can be understood now without the influence of the Christ who is known after the Spirit. As from a new and true spiritual centre we see human characters reorganized and expanding, gaining perfect poise, and revealing power of harmonious enlargement. Ethical conversion, as a result of the moral force flowing into the life of man from the Spirit of Christ, is a known and familiar fact. We witness still, as the immediate working of this new energy of spiritual life, not only inward changes, and radically different subjective states, such as a new mind towards God, and joy and peace in believing; but also, we observe, in consequence of it, marked outward results, — changes in conduct and throughout the relations of men towards one another and towards the world in which we now exist. The aspect of sea and sky, of birth and death, of friendship and of home, all is changed to the believer; a new light seems to fall from the Spirit over all. We witness as present and undeniable fact the realization of the words of one of the first disciples: "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new." [1]

Now in this Christian experience we have more than

[1] 2 Cor. v. 17.

rational assent to historical probabilities. It is the answer of the spirit within to the Spirit of God. It is the Christ known after the Spirit, and no more after the flesh. Neither the validity nor the significance of this experience of Christ after the Spirit can be destroyed by the simple assertion that it is only a faith, an inward experience, a spiritual phenomenon. For all experience, as we have seen, is grounded in the general principle of faith; all knowledge is at bottom an act of trust. The only legitimate question is whether this particular act of faith, this special application of the principle of faith, is allowable or not. And the answer to that question is given in the real contents of Christian experience as a present spiritual life, and it is verified and confirmed by the constant repetition of that experience under similar conditions of life. The verifying test, in other words, of repeated spiritual experiment, — the same phenomenon occurring with constancy under similar conditions, — is met and satisfied in this Christian experience of the Spirit. Given similar conditions, — the preaching of the gospel, some knowledge of Jesus Christ, and a penitent disposition, — and the same experience of trust in Christ, the joy of a new obedience, and the blossoming of hope immortal in the heart may be expected to recur again and again. The experience is sufficiently constant, and it has been verified for eighteen centuries through a succession of lives sufficiently long and continuous, to establish a law of spiritual life according to Christ Jesus. The exceptions which seem to occur do not disprove the rule; for there are confessedly hindrances and limitations enough in our ignorance, as well as in our sinfulness, to prevent the same working of the same Spirit everywhere, and to account for some seeming failures in the manifestation of its power. But, on the whole, and as a law of life, the Christ who gave to disciples in Jerusalem the promise of his Spirit, has always been with men, and is now working the greater works of faith in the life of humanity. The typical Christian experience of the Spirit of Christ is an experience which is of no private interpretation; it contains within

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itself a tendency towards universality: "Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end."[1]

(3) The Object of Christian faith is still in part prophetic, and consequently the faith is modified by this prophetic character of its object.

The Christ in whom disciples believe is not simply the historical Jesus; neither is he only the ideal Christ as revealed by the Spirit in the continuous Christian consciousness of his Church; he is also the Christ to come, — the Christ whose second coming is expected by faith. Hence faith in him must be characterized by a certain prophetic element and tone; it is faith in an object not yet fully revealed, or completely known. The object of Christian faith is neither to be held within the limitations of the past, nor is it contained within the bounds of this world's history. It transcends the spiritual imagination of this present age, and appears before the uplifted eye of faith in the glory of the clouds of heaven. The Christ is the best known, yet the unknown object of man's love and hope; he was the Son of man on earth; he is the light of the truest Christian life of the present age; and also he is the unseen glory of future revelation. While the disciples of old were looking, a cloud of heaven received him from their sight. So the Object of Christian faith has vanished into the prophetic mystery of the hereafter; and we know not what we shall be, for we cannot fully know what He is like until we shall see Him even as He is.[2]

This prophetic as well as historic character of the Christ imparts to Christian faith a certain indefiniteness of imagination, a glow of feeling, and a largeness of hope, which distinguish it from belief in the known laws of nature, or even in the moral order of the world. The Christian faith, from the prophetic nature of its object, must always be expansive, expectant, ready to take wing, and capable of ever new fulfilments of itself. The ethical contents of a prophetic faith in an ideal which is now known in part, cannot be bound to the letter of the Scripture, nor fixed in the thought of any passing age; they are the ethics of a

[1] Is. ix. 7.

[2] 1 John iii. 2.

faith striving for ever higher realizations of itself, and looking towards larger completions of life than as yet appear. The Christian faith in the Christ who is to come in glory, is consequently, on the ethical side of it, a faith in moral progress, and fulfilments beyond fulfilments of its conception of good.

The progressive character of Christian ethics is no accidental thing, but it is secured in the nature of the object of our faith, the Christ who is to come, as well as the Christ who has already come on earth. What other faith may be laid at the foundation of ethics which shall so secure in itself the growth and expansion of existing ethical types?

2. The general faith-principle in human nature is peculiarly intensified in the Christian application and exercise of it.

We have just seen in what directions, and to what extent, faith in its Christian exercise is modified by the nature of its object; we notice still further the peculiar intensification and luminousness of faith when fixed on Christ. The object to which this faith is attracted is the Light of the world; the faith which is fixed on Him becomes full of light. The spiritual splendor of the object which is seen and followed, is reflected in the faith which is turned towards the Christ. Hence faith in Christ is distinguished by its sunny certainty. It is the one faith which becomes sure of itself. The clear certainty of Christian faith has always been one of its remarkable spiritual characteristics. Such assurance of spirit in things unseen and eternal is phenomenal. Faith, which often grows dim when fed only from nature's resources, is quickened into pure flame, and shines with a revealing light over all the conditions of life, when it is kindled anew in the soul by the Spirit of Christ. The calm, deathless assurance of the first disciples in their belief in Jesus, was one of the moral miracles of human history. This faith showed at once its power to make martyrs. Men were willing to die in their vision of Christ. And that power to make men sure of it, even though they must die

for it, was no transitory effect of this new faith; it was not the consequence of a passing religious excitement in history; it has been the constant working and continuous energy of this faith in human experience. It is its nature to attract disciples, and of disciples to make apostles, who are confident enough to preach it as God's truth; and of apostles to make witnesses who are willing to die for Christ's sake.

This luminous and steady shining of the light which dwells as a "spiritual splendor" in the Christian faith, is to be observed not only in the great apostles and martyred witnesses of it, but also in the common lives of multitudes who are moved by some true influence of it, although in no unusual degree of its power. It is the faith which persists, as no other, through all the changes of their earthly experience. It is the deeper note of their lives. It is the continuous force of character amid the vicissitudes of fortune. The storms which scatter all else do not uproot this faith; the temptations which rise like a flood against other virtue, find in the steadfastness of this principle a barrier beyond which their waves can go no farther. It is a faith which sees in the light of its own object so clearly, that all other lights seem as shadows to it; and though often there have been heaped upon it arguments that might destroy it, it has blazed up, inextinguishable, through them all, and it will shine again in its own quenchless flame. The moral persistence of this faith, even against reasons, or without reasons, or in calm confidence of appeal to reasons yet to be rendered, is one of the ethical wonders of Christian history. It is the vital faith of humanity, having correspondence with all the vitalizing forces of the universe. The sun finds it, the air waits for it, the dews of heaven descend upon it; it springs up ever afresh, and grows, and blossoms, and the fruits of it remain.

We have now completed our survey of the chief eras of moral development, and their corresponding principles of moral appropriation. While these eras are clearly distinguishable in their prevailing characteristics and their

dominant principles, they cannot historically be sharply and absolutely separated, as though there were no working of the higher power in the lower forms of moral life, or no survival of the earlier in the later periods of moral evolution. For the moral order of humanity is continuous as the natural order, and, while new principles of life or spiritual energy may be introduced, no sudden breaks or absolutely new beginnings are to be found in the course of moral development, as there are none in physical evolution. Moreover, in the progress of human history, for considerable periods, a certain parallelism of moral movements and principles may be discerned. Thus there was a course of progressive prophecy accompanying the law of Israel; and in Christianity the Church was formed at Jerusalem in the shadow of the Temple, and the Jewish Sabbath lingered in the Jewish Christian worship beside the Lord's day. The word of the Baptist, "He must increase, but I must decrease," is true of every preparatory dispensation in its relation to the better age to come; the two co-exist for a period of time, the one diminishing as the other becomes controlling — the preparatory age passing not with sudden violence into the new, but with gradual absorption of its truth in the light of the dawning day. Moreover, the higher life has its germinal power in the lower, and signs and uses even of the lower may survive in the higher. So there is gospel in law, and law in gospel — a previous divine promise also involved in the divine commandment, and a law of God remaining in the free obedience of grace. The period of the Old Testament, in its broad contrast with the Christian era, was distinctively the dispensation of the law which came by Moses in its antithesis to the grace and truth which came by Christ. But the separation between the two was crossed by the prophetic hopes, and the contrast diminished by the approaches towards the latter day glory which were made in the psalms and by the Messianic expectations of Israel. So, likewise, when the new dispensation was fully come, the law was not abrogated but fulfilled. To a certain extent in historical Christianity the legal age lingers, and

the necessities of moral discipline and the ethical preparation of the peoples for the kingdom of heaven still render necessary a certain externalizing of the spirit of Christianity in custom, outward observances, institutional authority, and the law of Christian opinion. In the completion of man's moral development, at the close of the ethical struggle and triumph of the ages, the several dispensations, which have had their distinctively marked eras in the course of the development, will be found to have become coincident and harmonious; the lines of the commandments and the tendencies of free action will fall together; the law and the gospel will meet in the righteousness of love. Life at last in all its parts shall beat one music out.

From our whole survey thus far of the ethical nature and history of man, we have now gained some conception of the Christian Ideal as the highest conceivable moral good; and also we have learned how in the age of the Christ the new birth of the Christian personality has been brought to pass. We shall have to do in the following chapters with the last and highest product of man's moral history, that is, with the new man in Christ Jesus. It is the further task of Christian ethics to classify his virtues, to define his duties, to judge concerning his power of realizing still more signally the ideal which is the formative, constructive principle of his personality. And Christian ethics, in the further consideration of its object — the Christian personality — has not merely to observe the Christian man as an individual only, in the realization of individual virtue, but also it has to study and to draw its deductions from the new humanity, which is created in Christ Jesus, in its development through mutually related Christian persons, and in its progress towards that social good which is to be the consummation of the whole life of man.

Having gained for ethics the point of view of the Christian personality, we shall not be occupied, in the subsequent pursuit of it, with moral abstractions. The subject-matter of our further inquiry is not the realm of moral ideas, but the concrete spheres of Christian life and Chris-

tian society. We are now to enter not the shadowy regions of moral philosophy, pursuing in endless circles definitions of moral good ; but we are called to enter, and with humbleness of spirit, that most real and concrete realm of ethical religious life, which is the kingdom of God on earth. Our Christian ethics, therefore, must keep out among the moral realities of life. Christian ethics must fit life. It must be true to life, and true for life. Christian ethics is no abstract philosophy of virtue, but the practical Christian science of humanity.

CHAPTER IV

THE FORMS IN WHICH THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL IS TO BE REALIZED

THE forms in which from age to age the ideal is realized, may be regarded from two different points of view: we may observe them as conditions of the general welfare in their social aspects; or we may study them in their individual concreteness as conditions of personal well-being. In the first and larger view we regard them as the human goods which have been won by mankind; in the latter case we regard them as the particular forms of the ideal life to which individuals may have attained. As pertaining to society they are the goods for man; as belonging to individuals they are the virtues of men. The human goods and personal virtues may, however, be considered jointly, and without need of a constant separation in our ethics, for they are always bound up together in real life. The personal virtue belongs to and helps secure some general good; and the human welfare reflects the individual virtues and enhances them. Individual men, considered apart from all social relations, would be but shadows of men. Men live actually in human relations, and real virtue or vice can be measured only in view of the conditions of society under which the individual is born and trained. The practical importance of keeping individual and social ethics together in our discussion of virtues and duties will appear from the two following considerations.

First, virtue itself can neither be attained nor be rightly estimated in abstraction of the individual from the social welfare, any more than the perfectness of a bodily organ, or any organic function, can be determined apart from its

relation to the whole living tissue in which it exists. A perfect brain, a perfect heart, a perfect eye, — there is no such thing apart from the welfare of the whole body of which it is a member. A microscope, a telescope, or such an instrument of vision as an optician may make, might be better, in itself considered, as a contrivance for gathering the greatest number of rays of light to a focus, than is the eye of an eagle, or any living creature. But such a perfectly conceived optical instrument might be the poorest kind of an eye for the uses of a bird in the air, or for our human purposes. Similarly we cannot isolate moral qualities from moral conditions; we cannot hold the virtues apart from the general moral welfare of humanity. The personal virtues have each and all of them organic aptitudes and relations. Nor can we conceive of the perfectness of any individual character apart from the further conception of a perfect society in which it has its place and exercise. The ideal virtues are manifestations of perfect personal lives in the perfect society.[1]

It may be questioned whether any virtue is capable of complete individualization; all the virtues, even the most personal, may be seen to have some social character. Piety, for example, is as purely a personal virtue as can be imagined; yet personal piety, though an immediate relation between the soul and its God, becomes also reflexly, and in its actual working out in the life, a social act, affecting the social welfare.

Secondly, this necessity of keeping individual and social ethics in close correspondence appears further from the fact that it is impossible to form an adequate or just judgment of the degree of individual virtuousness apart from the general moral conditions and standards of an age. In the judgments which we form of individual conduct two considerations will enter; the one is the social moral factor (possessing a known and fixed value), the other is the

[1] There is profound truth in the remark of Mr. Green: "No individual can make a conscience for himself. He always needs a society to make it for him."—*Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 351. Similarly Dorner says: "The truth of every individual personality requires also that the spirit of the community should dwell in it, and the truth of the communities requires that free personalities should be their bearers." — *System der Christ. Sittenlehre*, s. 267. We may admit also in this connection the value of what Paulsen calls "social teleology," in determining what is good.

individual variable of virtue. Both enter together as factors in the moral equations of history. The general moral standard of a community, or the good which has already been realized in an age, forms a moral level, or social moral plain, from which individual character cannot entirely separate itself, and by means of which also the comparative altitude of individual virtue may be measured. The personal virtue is always relative to the moral constant of the age. To measure the highest attainment of one age by the moral standard of a different age would be injustice. An age of low morals — an age whose moral average is barbarous, or half-civilized — may present individual instances which, when measured from its own level, rise to a high moral altitude ; while, conversely, a man who lives on an elevated plain of social morality may be seen to possess a low degree of personal virtue when judged by the moral attainment of his time, although he may stand far above the most virtuous savage, and look down even on some aspects of the ancient biblical morality.

Perfect virtue is to be measured on the plane of a perfect social good. In that case all will be levelled up. In that conceivable perfection all private virtues would exist perfectly, and in the completest realizations of them, in the one social good ; their variety would consist not in differences of moral degree, but in distinctions of combination, as pure colors may be blended in most diversified flowers. But while the process of realization of the moral ideal is still going on, and a succession of moral dispensations is passing across the stage of our human history, the virtue and the age cannot be judged except in conjunction ; the personal character finds its place and has its limitations in the existing social type.

Not only for the sake of true moral judgments, but also in the interest of a sound moral education, should individual and social ethics be kept in continuous adjustment and readjustment. For the virtue which is demanded by one age may become the fault of another time. A good patriarchal law might prove the worst civic ordinance. A feudal virtue might be the industrial crime of a later age.

All life is related to environment. Virtue, as moral health, must have some fitness to its social conditions. The right character, the sound growth and vigor of a man, will show some adaptation to the laws and conditions of the social whole from which he cannot be isolated. To ignore these external conditions of moral life in a theory of virtue would be to become a moral doctrinaire. To forget or to despise them in practice would be to incur the danger of making good evil, and evil good. Yet possibly just because the method of ethics has been too much to isolate and to dissect man's moral nature, rather than to study sympathetically his actual life, books on moral philosophy have become proverbially as dry as anatomy, and as useless as a skeleton. Virtue is flesh and blood, and vital joy. Virtue has color, life, and reality. It cannot breathe in a vacuum. Virtue is character in healthful touch with life, and the spirit of life.

It is as difficult to enumerate the virtues, or to reduce them to any system, as it is to count the hues of a sunset and to reduce their evanescent tints to a definite scale of color. In proportion almost as nature assumes forms of beauty, or breaks in flowers or sunlit clouds into harmonies of color, the hard and fast lines of scientific definition are cast off; while nature waits for interpretation, it defies analysis. Similarly in the moral sphere classification has its proper place only among the elements; while the rich and manifold ethical life of man escapes analysis as it grows morally beautiful, and is unfolded in the varied hues and changeful iridescence of the virtues. Description must here take the place of definition. Or the fundamental colors of the spectrum of virtue may be distinguished by the moral philosophers, while the finer gradations, as well as the ever fresh combinations and diversified harmonies of its hues must be left to the poets who are the first moral interpreters of life. The moral philosophers of antiquity have named for us the primal and principal characteristics of virtue; and on the whole no better descriptive analysis of moral qualities has been given than we may find in the classic enumeration of the cardinal virtues.

Two general methods of classification have been followed in the books. By some writers the several virtues have been grouped around the different objects towards which our moral activities may be directed, and as many groups of virtues have been distinguished as there are specific objects of moral endeavor. This method is a tabulation of virtues, rather than a philosophic classification of them. Generally another, more philosophical method has been adopted, — that of classifying the virtues with reference to some principle of virtue.

Aristotle, finding the virtuous quality in the habit or disposition of the will to seek the highest practical good which a man can attain, proceeds from his principle of virtue very naturally to classify the virtues according to the rank or dignity of the functions to which they have reference. So his order of the virtues advances from the necessary and useful to the beautiful. (See Ueberweg, *Hist. of Phil.* vol. i. p. 173.)

Plato's principle of virtue was more subjective and idealistic. To the Platonists virtue consisted in the greatest possible likeness to the divine image, the highest good, God. Hence the principle of the Platonic classification of virtues was derived from the fitness of the soul for its proper task, which is the attainment of the morally beautiful, the good. The different functions of human nature in relation to practical ends do not, as with Aristotle, yield the several virtues ; but rather the capabilities of the soul for the good determine the forms of the cardinal virtues. Thus man's chief power and function of knowing determines the primal virtue of wisdom. The Platonic psychology, in short, yields directly the scheme of the Platonic virtues. Wisdom, valor, temperance have reference to the cognitive, the active, and the appetitive parts of human nature, and justice, the fourth virtue, is the balance or harmony of them all.

The ethics of the schoolmen follow in the main the classic schemes of the virtues, but graft often clumsily upon them certain supernatural virtues. In such juxtaposition of the natural and the supernatural in ethics, moral unity was lost. There was reproduced in ethics the same dualism which runs through the theology and the politics of the mediæval Church. The temporal and spiritual powers, alike in the doctrine, the ethics, and the ecclesiastical domination of mediæval Rome, were held in a fictitious and unstable unity. The higher and abiding unity of the Spirit had not been attained. The modern utilitarian ethics finds, broadly speaking, the formative principle of virtue in the fitness of an action for the largest conservation of life. The forms of the virtues may thus be determined, quite in the Aristotelian fashion, by reference to the ends of utility.

An original, yet too artificial classification of the virtues was adopted by Rothe in his *Theological Ethics* (vol. iii. § 602 ff.). Virtue, Rothe argues, consists in the individual's participation in, and free production of, the one highest good. The several virtues are thus determined both

subjectively and objectively; with reference, first, to the twofold nature or function of the individual life, viz. self-consciousness, and self-activity; and, secondly, with reference to their universal relations. Hence there are two fundamental forms of virtue, reasonableness and freedom. These are the general forms of virtue as determined with reference to the two general functions of man's life. From these general virtues, as they are to be still further defined objectively in relation to the idea of the highest good, the several concrete virtues may be derived.

Virtuous character impresses us as a unity of qualities. Whatever the particular combination of virtues in the character, for instance, of the warrior, the statesman, the good citizen, the true friend, the coördination of the virtues in that character impresses us as an organic whole. The qualities in which the character consists are not accidentally or mechanically associated, but vitally adapted and correlated. Moreover, the great variety of vital combinations of virtues in different characters indicates that the virtues are all organically related, or fitted to enter into organic relations with one another in character. There is a vital relationship, an organic unity of the virtues. Though existing in separate groups in different persons, they are manifestly adapted to each other, and have natural affinities, and were not formed to remain in isolation. The virtues are all of the same kind and blood. Their natural relationship is an admitted ethical fact.

This unity of the virtues is, in the first instance, a unity of principle. One virtuous quality pervades all the virtues. There is one vital and formative principle of virtue. Secondly, this relationship of the specific virtues is a unity of derivation. Each separate virtue descends from the same original source, and is a particular embodiment of the common principle of virtue. All are in relation because all have one origin and principle; as in physics the transformation of energy shows the primal unity of force. Hence a true description of the virtues, and still more, a philosophical classification of them, must proceed from the idea of the simple energy, or primitive, formative principle of virtue.

We might find our way further, accordingly, into this portion of our subject by borrowing from philosophical

ethics some account of the constitutive principle of virtue. But moral philosophy has several, and not accordant, answers to give to this question, — What is virtue? In what lies the primal and essential virtuous quality of an action?

In Christian ethics our answer to this question, on which the further classification and description of the virtues depend, should proceed directly from the Christian consciousness of virtue. The distinctive idea of the Christian personality will disclose immediately the Christian principle of virtue. That which makes the Christian character what it is, is its virtuous principle. The material principle, in other words, of the Christian consciousness, is its principle of virtue. How, then, shall we further determine this?

I. By an analysis of the Christian consciousness in its ethical contents. The answer to the question, what is virtue? is to be sought and found in the assertion which the Christian consciousness makes concerning its constituent principle or essential nature. We are to seek for this disclosure of the true nature of virtue in the mature and most perfectly formed Christian consciousness of life. Given such ethical embodiment, such manifestation of moral life in its highest and purest realization, what has it to declare of its own life-principle? what has it to disclose of its vital and essential virtue? In general, the idea of the Christian man which informs and irradiates his whole moral character is the thought of being made Christlike. The ethical passion of Christians is for Christlikeness.

So Professor Tholuck, whose memory has still a rare religious fragrance, speaking to students of his aim in life, would say, "I have but one passion, — Christ, only Christ." In Martensen's correspondence with Dorner is to be found a suggestive sketch of the supreme position which the idea of imitation of Christ may hold in Christian ethics: "I am working over anew this winter my lecture on ethics, and I am seeking to carry out more definitely the idea of the imitation of Christ, as the middle point of Christian ethics. The kingdom of God as the highest good finds its central realization in the imitation of Christ" (*Briefwechsel*, B. i. ss. 215 f.).

This general account of the principle of virtue in the Christian consciousness admits, however, of closer definition. In the Christianity of the apostles two words are of so frequent occurrence that they may be taken as key-notes of the primitive Christian consciousness, — the words *faith* and *love*. Of these two, love is the last word of apostolic Christianity. Not only is it the last word of the apostolic teaching, as it fell from the lips of St. John towards the close of the first century, after the other apostles had finished their work and passed from earth, but it was also the final word even of the great apostle of faith: "But now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."[1] There is in the New Testament no other word so constantly used, so common to all the disciples, so expressive of the spirit of the ethics of the Master, as the word which was made the greatest in St. Paul's epistle, and which is repeated, like the key-note of a song, in the epistles of St. John.

We may find in love, therefore, the central and essential principle of the moral consciousness of apostolic Christianity. Love is the primal form of virtue in Christianity. Love is virtue in its immediate manifestation among men.[2]

What, then, is the relation of that other apostolic word *faith* to love? Is the virtuous principle in the Christian consciousness a double principle, faith and love? Or what is the relation between the two?

The distinction which has been happily made in theology between the material and the formal principle of the Protestant reformation will prove equally helpful in the field of ethics. Faith was said to be the material, and the Scriptures the formal principle of the reformation. In ethics we may say that love is the material, and faith the formal principle of Christian virtue. The Christian character is formed by faith; it lives in love. It is constituted what it is through faith, but it consists in love. Or, we might say, love, which is the essential Christian character,

[1] 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

[2] Love is not a form assumed by this principle for its manifestation, but the principle of virtue in its immediate revelation of itself.

in its receptive and formative principle, is trust; and faith, which is constitutive of Christian character, in its positive and active power becomes love.[1] Faith passes into love which abides. And love remains love only as it always trusts. The two belong together, therefore, as condition and completion of the same virtue; as the formal cause and material principle of the same character. Faith is the finiteness, the dependence of love. Love is the independence, the infiniteness of faith.

The English reformers and Puritans stoutly maintained that love is not "the life and soul," "the inward and essential form," of faith: so John Ball (*A Treatise of Faith*, London, 1637, p. 40). The position taken above, that faith rather is the form of love (that in which love is begun and constituted), agrees with the Protestant contention concerning the priority of faith, while it avoids the error (into which Ball fell) of separating these two, as though one were an external instrument to the other.

The further question has been asked, whether faith is to be deemed a virtuous act, and if virtuous, what is the place which faith may hold in the hierarchy of the virtues? If love takes the first place, shall faith follow in the second place?

A little discrimination will relieve the confusion in which the moral standing of faith sometimes seems to be left in Christian thought. All moral action has character as virtuous or vicious; and faith, as we have seen, is not a mere passive state, not an animal sentiency, but personal receptivity; and as such it involves willing, and is moral action. In this sense it is untrue to say that we have nothing to do in being saved by grace, or that faith has no merit. For faith has character, and is good, so far as it goes. In the biblical instances it was imputed to men for righteousness, and nothing which is morally indifferent can be so imputed. A thing absolutely unmoral cannot enter into a moral order and be counted. Neither could a new righteousness proceed from faith, if there was no moral beginning at least of right life in faith.

This is not, however, to assert that faith has any saving merit The virtuous character of faith as a moral act is

[1] Gal. v. 6.

one thing; what that act can accomplish is quite a different matter. The condition of salvation presented in the gospel is twofold; there is a hand of faith stretched forth, and also an Object to be grasped by faith. The new moral life, the salvation which is to be gained, will consist in the real union of faith and its Object, not in any virtue of the faith apart from its Object. When it is said that faith has no merit to win salvation, it is not denied that it has good character as our moral act, but it is simply affirmed that faith is not of itself productive of the good of forgiveness and new life which it receives; it is a receptive, and not a productive virtue. It is morally acceptive of Christ's righteousness, but not causative of God's justification. For it is by grace that we have been saved through faith.[1]

There is still another sense in which faith may be said to have virtue. Leading to love, it may also become itself a further manifestation of love. The pure spring of love, it may flow through love with deepening power. The more one loves, the more also he will trust. Yet the virtuousness of faith is its love; and in general, only as faith has love and expresses love can it be regarded as a virtue. The believing act, as a loving act, is good. In the last analysis the virtuousness of faith may be reduced to the incipient love which is in it. As an act of trust, — a giving of personal confidence, — it implies an outgoing of self towards another, which is love in the moral germ at least of it.

In the infinite One, who is self-dependent, faith disappears, and is not to be contemplated as among the perfections of the Godhead, for the Divine love in its infinite wisdom has no need of faith; — unless, indeed, it may be thought that the love of God to Christ, the Son of his love, involved a divine trust in him, and that through the relation of the Father to the Son, and in God's free justification of Christ's friends, before they are personally worthy of it, faith may be said to become also an outgoing and manifestation of the divine perfection. Since faith is not

[1] Eph. ii. 5.

a necessary quality of the absolute good, a moral excellence of God, obviously it cannot be regarded as itself the material principle of virtue; for the essence of virtue is eternal. Faith is virtuous only relatively, and in finite, dependent beings.

Faith, while thus virtuous, is not, however, to be placed by itself as a specific virtue among the many separate virtues. It exists rather before and through all the Christian virtues as their condition and necessary Christian form. It might be called, in its first exercise, the Christian preexistence of the virtues. They are potentially involved in it; it will accompany and give Christian character to them all.

For our classification of the virtues we start, accordingly, from the Christian personality which possesses the virtuous quality, love, and which lives through faith, its conditional element, or formal as distinguished from material principle. The Christian virtues will be the special manifestations, in the life of faith, of this personal Christian love, and their possible combinations and permutations.

The virtues may be primarily distinguished as we discern the three essential elements in which love consists. For love contains in its unity a trinity of virtue. It comprehends within itself the three following distinctions: moral self-affirmation, self-impartation, and self-existence in others. Love affirms its own worthiness, imparts to others its good, and finds its life again in the well-being of others.

1. Love is self-affirmation.

A certain respect for self, and declaration of the worth of self, enters as a primal element into all true love. The giver must have respect for his gift, or giving would lose all character. In every good gift there is implied a sense of the worthiness or fitness of the gift. To love worthily is at the same time to be worthy of love. He is not a true lover who in his love does not keep his honor, who is not himself made pure by virtue of his love. Any true affection contains in it this element of self-respect. If the gift which love makes when it offers itself, is not by the very

offering of it declared to be something worthy of acceptance, the love is no true offering. Love without implicit and constant maintenance of itself as worthy of acceptance would cease to be love, and become lust. Holiness is therefore involved in love as its essential respect to itself. It is the honor of love. Righteousness is not, therefore, an independent excellence to be contrasted with, or even put in opposition to, benevolence; it is essential part of love. Love without this assertion of its own worthiness, love without righteousness, would not be love. We cannot conceive of a true human love as existing and continuing without this affirmation of its own worthiness as a gift of self to another; still less are we able to conceive of an infinite love without the indwelling energy of an eternal self-affirmation. The heavenly Father is the Holy Father.[1] Righteousness is the eternal genuineness of the Divine love. Infinite love is essentially also absolute justice.

2. Love is self-impartation.

It is of the nature of love to give, and to give of self. The self-giving, which is inward law of love, is not to be satisfied by the bestowal of outward things. These may be used as expressions of its benevolence, or as accompaniments of its exercise. But the inward and essential nature of love is to give of self to the utmost. Love does not fill up its measure of devotion until the lover has given not merely all that he has, but all that he is. Self-impartation is a first necessity of love. Such is the law of love as we find it in its human revelations. In all true affections there is a certain communication of personality. We give in our friendships not merely of our substance, but of ourselves to others. The difference between the relation of a patron to a client, and the relation of friend to friend, consists precisely in this, that in the former only gifts are bestowed, while in the latter something of the personal life is shared. We give our hearts in our friendships. In noble comradeships men will give their lives together. And love, as it is manifested in its purest and

[1] John xvii. 11.

fullest measure in the family life, is in all things a mutual self-impartation; — the members of the family not only dwell under one roof, but in all possible ways they live as members one of another. Married love rests on a covenant of self-giving, and is continued only through mutual self-impartation.

For still stronger reason, therefore, must we deem self-impartation even to the uttermost to be the inward law of perfect and infinite Love. It is the nature of God as love to give Himself to the creation. Should the Divine benevolence be conceived as exhausted or stayed in its giving without any self-communication of God to his creation, before the utmost possible impartation of the Divine image and life to the creation, God's love would thereby be rendered finite and imperfect. Since self-bestowal is essential nature of love even within our human limitations, and since God is love, the glory of God will be shown in his self-impartation to something other than Himself; and such self-giving of God's love will not cease nor fall short until the largest possible communication of the divine has been bestowed.

Is there any limit to the self-impartation of love? The material and physical conditions of self-communication set limits to the outgoings of our human affections. To ignore these limitations would be to fly against nature. But we cannot, with the Greek Platonists, conceive the Divine love to be similarly bound by any physical necessity, without also supposing matter to be eternal as God, and imagining a dark, impassible physical background of the moral nature of God. If there is a limit to be conceived in the self-impartation of an infinite love to a finite object, that limit will be ethical, not physical.[1]

The bound of divine benevolence in the creation is not to be found in some uncreated nature of matter by which the omnipotence of love itself would be held in abeyance and subjected to external necessity; it is to be found, if

[1] A metaphysical limitation in the communication of the infinite to the finite may indeed be posited; but, if thought out, it would run back into the ethical reason for any finite creation, so that the ultimate limitation would still be ethically determined.

anywhere, in the love itself, and will be a purely ethical limitation.

This ethical limit of self-impartation is apparent in any true human affection, and is set by the primal moral quality of love which has just been distinguished — its self-affirmation. Love wills to impart itself up to the limit of the maintenance of its own worth of being, but no further. Love cannot so impart itself as at the same time to destroy itself. Love in self-bestowal cannot become suicidal. If the impulse of giving inherent in any human love should go beyond the limit of respect to its own being and worth, the affection would at once lower itself into lawless passion; love would so overreach itself as to cease to be good. For example, nothing is more self-sacrificial than a mother's love. Yet a mother who should so love her child as to let the purity and holy sweetness of her affection be lost in some endeavor to serve or to secure the happiness of the child, would thereby forfeit the very truth and power of her love. The ethical limit of self-impartation is always to be found in the ethical necessity of self-affirmation; the benevolence of love has its moral bounds in the holiness of love.

Applying this same ethical limit to our conception of the Infinite One and the absolute Love, we reason that God could not morally have so imparted His own being to the creation as to cease Himself to be God over it. To surrender His sovereignty would be to deny His love. Self-imparting love will create man in the image of God, but it will not make man as God. Of His infinitely blessed life God will impart to the creation intelligence, moral capacity, all the good that is implied in self-conscious and free existence. Yet God, however immanent in man's spirit, must remain the transcendent One; and the moral creation, in its fullest reception of the Divine, will continue to be a dependent creation, having its life from God, and not in itself, because God is love, and perfect love cannot deny itself. Pantheism is thus excluded by an ethical necessity. An ever deepening immanence, yet always some transcendence of God, is ethically secured in the conception of God as perfect love.

3. The third element in the trinity of love is self-finding in another, the living in another's life.

Vicariousness belongs also to the integral nature of love. It is love's power of putting self through sympathy into another's life, of taking another into its own heart. By our sympathetic affections we live others' lives, and are made happy or suffer pain through our oneness with them. This sympathetic faculty of love gives it interpretative power; by its vicariousness it can enter into alien moods, make itself at home in strange experiences, become one in spirit with the souls of others. This third element of the trinity of love may be said to proceed from the other two; for the love which affirms itself, and the love which imparts itself, receive their completion in the love which finds itself in another, and brings that other into its own life. So every pure human affection is at once a losing and a finding of self in the friendship which is cherished, or the home which is blessed.

This vicarious power of love attains its ideal completeness in the Christian revelation of God. The Father enters into the life of humanity in the Word that was made flesh. God lives in most intimate sympathy with man through the Holy Spirit. The eternal Love, which in the person of the Son lost its life in the world, may be said to find its life again in the redeemed humanity which it takes to itself and glorifies. Through the vicarious power of His love, God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, and our life is hid with Christ in God.

Through this vicarious power of sympathy with the creation, which is inherent in love, the possibility of reconciliation, and final harmony of the life of a sinful humanity with the life of God, is rendered conceivable. The possibility of atonement is involved in the creation from the beginning, since love from eternity is vicarious as well as self-imparting, a love that wills to live in, and, if need be, to suffer with, the creation which as benevolence it calls forth.

A clear and full conception of this moral trinity of love contains great consequences for theology. And Christian ethics has a rich service still

to render to Christian theology in the purification and enrichment of its idea of God. Physical necessities and limitations, — that fathomless background which lay darkly behind the Platonic conception of the Good, — as well as the errors in the truth of Spinozism and modern pantheism, can be removed only by a thorough ethicizing, in the light of the Christian consciousness, of the whole philosophical conception of God.

Our present task forbids our working out these ethical suggestions farther along theological lines. Our immediate concern with this analysis of love into its three primary elements, lies in the help which we may derive from it in the further determination of human virtues. From this supreme ethical principle of love, as it is to be studied in the Christian consciousness of life, we have obtained a threefold division of the virtues; viz. righteousness (holiness), benevolence, and sympathy (altruistic interest in others).[1]

This is the most general category of the virtues which have their unity in love. These are the three primary colors of love. From each one of these three, in secondary combination with the others, further specific virtues may be derived; the possible shadings and harmonies of these primary colors of virtue are various as the hues of the solar spectrum. Thus, from the primary virtue of self-affirmation or self-respect, combined with variant degrees of the other elements, may be derived that whole class of virtues which moralists treat of under the category of the self-regarding virtues. And likewise from each of the other primary principles, if we blend the other two as secondary with it, many and diversified virtues may be composed. The element of love, which in each instance is taken as primary, will determine the positive virtue, while the other two elements will yield its modifications and qualifications. We do not care, however, at this point to pursue further this more specific deduction of the virtues, as repetition may be avoided by noticing in the chapter concerning duties discriminations which might be drawn as we have just indicated.

[1] Righteousness as subjective regard for our own moral being, is holiness; as objective regard for the persons of others, it becomes justice.

In the study of living species two courses of investigation lie open to science. We may take some typical form, as we find it in existence, and determine its anatomy. We may find the idea of the type in some mature and perfect specimen of it. Another way also of studying specific forms lies open, within certain limits, to biologists. They may proceed through embryological researches. They may seek to trace the genetic development of the life which in some finished form of it is presented to their investigation; they may endeavor by retracing, so far as they may, the processes of its formation and growth, to understand its origin.

Thus far we have been determining the Christian principle of virtue in its typical form by analysis of the Christian moral consciousness. We have found love in its trinity to be the idea of the Christian type of virtue. We have reached this conclusion by observation and interpretation of the fully developed Christian moral consciousness.

II. We have now to begin our inquiry over again from an opposite quarter, and to test the result of our analysis by what may be designated as an embryological, or genetic, investigation into the nature of Christian virtue. We shall have to consider in this connection the origin, process of formation, and stages of growth of the Christian principle of virtue.

1. The Genesis of Christian Virtue.

The Christian personality comes to its birth in a humanity which has Christ in it. The life of the individual Christian man proceeds from a human life which has received Christ, and already is in part become Christian. In the generation of the Christian personality — the new birth of soul — traces and signs of all the preceding history of man's spirit may be discerned; all the ages may repeat their history of promise, law, covenant, prophecy, in the coming of a soul into Christian self-consciousness; — as the history of the species is summed up in the formation and birth of every individual man. But however clearly or distinctly the earlier stadia of man's life may be

traced in the process of spiritual regeneration through which one is born into the kingdom of God, the chief and distinctive fact is that every Christian man is born into a humanity which already has Christ in it, and is become a different humanity because it has Christ in it. In other words, the new Christian morality does not start from a Christless ground of humanity. It proceeds from an eternal redemption in Christ.[1] The individual Christian is not the first-born child of God; Christ is the first-fruits; every man of us is a member of a human race which has the Christ as its head, which has not been left Christless in God's eternal purpose. We are born into a lost race which has been found by God in Christ. Our human nature, as a nature, is redeemed in Christ. So in Christ shall all be made alive.[2] Human nature exists not merely under the curse and in its sins, but in the Christ, — inheriting the promise, and having God with it and for it.[3] We discover, then, in this humanity in which Christ is, a natural ground already prepared for the birth and the growth of the individual Christian and his personal virtue. A human regeneration has already been potentially wrought in Christ, of which infant baptism has become in the Church the sign and the seal. A new life has been opened at the heart of our humanity, a new obedience wrought into the will of man, a new consecration and hope imparted to the spirit of man through Christ and the forces of his continuous life in humanity. This truth of the Christ once incarnate in humanity, and, always spiritually present in the continuous life of man, forms the ethical, Christian ground of society. And from this Christian social condition the work of the Spirit proceeds in the birth of each individual into Christian manhood.

It is true in some sense that humanity inherits the good of all true sacrificial lives. Their virtue has entered into and enriched the blood of the race. We are baptized into their spirit. The social whole, into which the individual comes at his birth, is the sum-total of the redemptive virtues, as well as destructive sins, of all past generations.

[1] Eph. iii. 11. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 22. [3] See above, p. 190.

Every pure life purifies the social atmosphere which the new-born child shall breathe. Men's virtues and vices live on in the ethical life of the race. Christ's life may thus be conceived of as a continuous life under the same law of spiritual descent and influence. It affords the most significant illustration of the law of human solidarity. Under this law the Christian self-consciousness of virtue in each individual instance of it has its origin in a social life which already to some extent has been Christianized. Ours is an inheritance not only of a nature partly dehumanized by ancestral sins, but also possessing Christ's virtue, and to some extent already ethicized and spiritualized by the indwelling of Christ and his renewing grace. We often may notice in the processes of regeneration, and particularly just before the birth of a soul into clear Christian self-consciousness, the signs of this double inheritance — the corruptive and the redemptive, the Adamic and the Christian. In our partly Christianized humanity the individual is born to a moral conflict. Two possible lives are met in the cradle of the Christian child. Moral conflict is the birthright which a humanity, once lost in sin and now found in Christ, gives to every child; and with the necessity of conflict the possibility also either of personal defeat or victory. In proportion to the advance of Christian virtue which a community has already gained, in proportion to the degree in which society or the home has already been Christianized, will be the facility with which the child may come into the new life of the Christ, and the naturalness of its personal freedom from the sin of the world. So far as the human, social ground of individual existence has already been Christianized, the moral probability of Christian virtue and victory for the child will be greater. Christianity is eventually to come in the blood of the race, as well as through the conversion of individual souls. Christian ethics, therefore, will be deeply and persistently concerned with the Christian social basis of individual life.

2. The Process of the Formation of Christian Character. We may trace to some extent the process of conversion

by which a Christian character is made possible. This process is religious, and as such is subject-matter of dogmatics; but it is also a moral change, and as such belongs to Christian ethics. In the moral aspect of it certain general characteristics may be distinguished. One of the earliest is the gain of a distinct and often painful sense of the moral disharmony of our nature. There is awakened a sense of sin, and sin is realized as personal unworthiness or guilt. In this consciousness of moral division and failure there is involved also a sense of personal helplessness, dependence on some higher Power for deliverance, and the desire, above all things else, for forgiveness and restoration.

Through acceptance of the gospel and personal trust in Christ, the moral nature, which has been thus aroused, receives new energy and springs forward to hopeful obedience. A new heart is gained for duty and for all moral endeavor. The soul, having heard and obeyed the call of the true Leader, has issued a declaration of spiritual independence. The battle, the lifelong campaign for its virtuous freedom, is by no means fought out; a prolonged revolutionary war of the soul for its freedom may have to follow; but the day of conversion has been to many a soul its religious emancipation, — a new era of liberty, though of liberty to be won and maintained through arduous moral conflict, dates from that hour of its declaration of Christian independence.

With this inward birth into the Christian life there is given also the assurance of ultimate moral victory and harmony. The new motive and principle of life becomes, in the experience of the Christian man, its own heavenly witness. It brings in itself the testimony of the Spirit from which it proceeds, — the sense of forgiven sin, of renewed sonship, and the hope of final attainment of the ideal life in union with the Spirit of God.

3. The Growth of the New Life.

After the new birth, or awakening into Christian consciousness, the new principle of life will seek to realize itself in all the activities, relations, and spheres of per-

sonal life. The true Christian will not be content to remain a Christian in general, but he will strive to become a Christian in the particulars of his daily life. And as the moral personality has been inwardly drawn to Christ as its living centre and adoration, so will it outwardly grow more conformable to his likeness. This growth in the new life will require also a process of purification from elements alien to the divine principle of it, — that continuous repentance which is the casting off of the sinful nature in all its habits and dispositions, and which must characterize Christian experience until that which is perfect is come.

Moreover, the moral realization of the life of Christ in the life of the individual believer must be wrought out in relation to the whole ethical condition of the generation and community in which the Christian lives; the individual conformity to Christ will find both restrictions and helps, both limits which cannot be passed, and also barriers to be removed, in the general moral consciousness of the age. The Christian man, although not of the world, is in it; Peter and James were in Jerusalem, and could not altogether forget the temple; and Paul's Christian experience shows his training in Rabbinical habits of mind. The social conditions and general intelligence of an age will modify the type of Christian character prevalent in it.

From this brief description of the vital processes through which the Christian consciousness comes to the birth, and grows toward its perfect fruition, we may discover again what is the material principle of that life. Its condition, its formal principle, as appears plainly from the account of its origin, is faith. Trust in Christ is the beginning of the gospel in the soul. But love quickly emerges as its master passion. Repentance and faith were the first conditions of personal attachment to Jesus; but the following him in personal loyalty *was* discipleship. So that when we study the principle of Christian virtue in its origin, when we trace it from its beginnings in faith to its full self-consciousness in communion with Christ, we find that its ethical character is love, but a love which from its origin

and growth receives a peculiarly personal and intense warmth and devotion. The essential principle of Christian virtue is love, yet not love in the abstract, not love formally conceived and philosophically exercised, not love to being in general, but love of being as all its worth is summed up in the Person of Christ and his reign, — love of the highest good as presented to the utmost devotion of human hearts in the revelation of God's glory in Christ and the eternal purpose of his grace. It is love of Love in its living fulness and completion in the kingdom of heaven. Consequently the principle of virtue in the Christian life, by reason of its immediate relation to Christ, and through him with all the redeemed, becomes love in its maximum of personal intensity, in its highest energy and purity.[1]

No formal definition of the nature of virtue is given in the Scriptures; yet it is not difficult to perceive the one virtuous quality which appears in the biblical descriptions of the virtues, and to test by this biblical principle of virtue the deductions which we have sought to make from Christian experience. One hardly needs other help than his concordance to learn how love runs through both Testaments as a common quality or unitary principle of the virtues. "Oh how love I thy law" (Ps. cxix. 97); love is the summary of the law (Matt. xxii. 37–40; 1 John ii. 7–11; iv. 7–13). Other measures of virtue which are given in the Scriptures, such as following Christ, the Golden Rule, the exhortation to holiness, involve love and proceed from love.

In what has been written above we have sought to determine the principle of Christian virtue as it is presented in its concrete reality in Christian experience. We do not, however, overlook the distinction which has been made, by Prof. Henry B. Smith, between the statement of the "principle of true virtue in the abstract," and the "statement of the general principle of all virtue in the concrete" (*System of Christian Theology*, pp. 222 sq.). But the former belongs properly to philosophical ethics. The question in what does true virtue consist, has had a peculiar fascination for the New England theologians. Edwards was led to enter upon the discussion of the nature of virtue by considerations which presented themselves in his treatise on sin; there was a practical religious interest involved in determining in what holiness consists; and the urgency of the pulpit in the effort to convict men of sin has had much to do with the prominence given to the discussion of the abstract principle of virtue and true holiness by the New England divines. Edwards's definition of virtue was this: "True virtue most essentially consists in benevolence to Being in general. Or perhaps to speak more accurately, it is

[1] So in John xvii. 22–26.

that consent, propensity, and union of heart to Being in general, that is immediately exercised in a general good will" (*Works*, ii. p. 262). Edwards's theory of virtue has received different interpretations and has occasioned much discussion in the later schools of New England theology. Dr. N. W. Taylor, of New Haven, adopted a modified form of the happiness theory of virtue; he made virtue, however, to consist not in action productive of happiness, but in the happiness found in benevolent action. We find our highest pleasure in doing good, and our ultimate motive in doing good is the pleasure we find in it. An acute and profound criticism of all the happiness theories of virtue, and also the ripest fruit of the distinctive New England theological conception of the nature of virtue, is to be found in the *System of Christian Theology* of the late Prof. Henry B. Smith, which was published from his lectures after his death. His own statement of the nature of true virtue in its general form is: "True Virtue is love (the highest subjective state) of the highest good (the greatest objective well being)." In the most definite form his statement is: "True Virtue, is love of all intelligent and sentient beings, according to their respective capacities for good, with chief and ultimate respect to the highest good, or holiness" (*opus cit.* p. 223). The merit of this definition, its advance beyond Edwards, consists in its more distinct recognition of virtue as love to being not merely as being, but in its relation to the ends of all being, love to each being in his place in the system as a whole. Proceeding to define virtue in its concrete manifestation, he adds: "*The real statement*, then, of the fundamental principle of all true virtue would be, that it consists in love to God, and to all other beings in their relation to, and as parts of, the divine system of things" (p. 231).

This origin of the Christian principle of virtue, it should be further noted, excludes from it a false sense of merit, which was never absent from the Grecian doctrine of virtue. Humility, which has no proper and secure place in Aristotle's or Plato's moral philosophy, but which surely should have some deep root in the morality of finite and sinful beings, is a natural virtue of Christian ethics, and it is always to be found at the spiritual source of the Christian virtues.

Merit has been happily defined by Mr. Stephen[1] as "the value set upon virtue." In the Christian consciousness virtue has indeed a value not to be measured in terms of any other good. In this sense it has merit. But the value of it is value received from the grace in which it was constituted. It has to the Christian mind merit as of all things the most valuable; yet it has no merit as a self-originated good, constituted by any value-giving

[1] *Science of Ethics*, p. 270.

power of the human will. It is the merit of a character freely received from the original source of all goodness and love. And so far as virtue makes increase of itself and earns additional value through the moral conquests of our life, its merit is still held in a grateful sense of dependence upon the Divine Love from which it first proceeds, and by the Spirit of which it lives and triumphs. Hence in the Christian consciousness is given the double possibility of a high sense of the merit of virtuous conduct and the exclusion also of the demerit of pride. In some sense this would hold true even of the normal development of a finite moral agent whose life had not been broken by sin. His virtue would always be a dependent virtue, the merit or value of it being attributable to its source and power in the original and infinite love of God. But in a special and enhanced sense is it true of an abnormal moral development — one broken and rendered powerless by sin — that its virtue must always be to the praise of the glory of Him who hath called us by his own glory and virtue.[1]

The merit of our virtue rests on God's justifying love. It is not the human faith, but the Divine Christ who has given humanity new value in God's sight. Christian virtue mediated through him, and kept in his Spirit, becomes a thank-offering to God. It is to the praise of God's love in Christ. So an apostle, not denying the value of the virtues, but knowing their gracious source and dependence, said, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."[2]

In the practical precepts of the New Testament many virtues are commended, but no complete description of all the virtues possible to faith is given in any single passage. They are regarded as the fruits of the Spirit, and are described in general as "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal. v. 22–23). A rich cluster of virtues is mentioned as the fruit of the light: "Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth), proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord" (Eph. v. 9–10). Compare also the process of moral addition of the virtues described in 2. Pet. i. 5–8.

The virtues are seen in human characters only as they have been mixed with human passions and sins. Abso-

[1] 2 Pet. i. 3. [2] 1 Cor. i. 31.

lutely pure moral colors are hard to find on earth. A description of the virtues consequently which is true to life will take account of the faults by which the virtues are adumbrated, even when not wholly corrupted by vices. Some of the virtues are peculiarly exposed to such loss of light in our impure atmosphere. Some are liable to evil reactions under exposure to the influences of unfortunate temperaments or wrong habits of feeling. Humility, for example, easily becomes mixed with pride; when one grows conscious of his humility he is in danger of becoming a little proud of it. "I have not sinned for some time," said a believer in Christian perfection to a theological professor. "Then," replied the professor, "you must be proud of it." "Indeed I am," was the unwitting confession of the lack of the grace of humility. A very necessary part of the discipline of the Christian life will consist in the purification of the virtues which one already may have won, so easily do they become admixed with the sin of the world.

The virtues, likewise, in this educational life, may be possessed in different degrees of their excellence, and the proportion of the virtues in character becomes a subject for Christian care and study. It has been said by Martensen, with a true insight into the processes of character, that we should introduce into ethics the idea of the disciple, and have regard to the different degrees of faith and love in the life of the disciple.[1]

These admixtures and degrees of virtue we shall be concerned with in our discussion of Christian duties: the determination of the principle of virtue in its more ideal forms has been the aim of this chapter; it necessarily precedes the more practical discrimination of the concrete virtues, which it is the duty of the Christian to seek for and to cherish.

[1] "Has not ethics often given too abstract a description of Christian virtue, without taking enough into account the differences of degrees, and consequently also the pedagogy of Christ, the pedagogy of his educative love, which is, however, of the highest importance for life?"—*Briefwechsel*. B. i. s. 216.

CHAPTER V

METHODS OF THE PROGRESSIVE REALIZATION OF THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL

We have no experience of the normal development of moral life in a sinless world, and it is left to imagination to conceive the methods of its pure and happy development. But the possibility of a perfectly normal moral development is shown by the growth of the child Jesus, and his favor with God and man.[1] His perfection, however, was not secured under the most friendly conditions, amid all conceivable ministries of divine powers, but it was won from a conflict with the evil one, in a close and humiliating union with a human nature already possessed by the powers of evil. Jesus' life is the victory of the moral in the most adverse circumstances, — the final triumph of the moral over the utmost evil of the universe. The Son of man, in view of the beginnings of his spiritual conquests, "beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven."[2]

Imitation of Christ in the method of his life becomes, therefore, the possible way for men to enter into the perfection of their Father in Heaven.[3] The open way of progress towards the moral ideal for our world is the method of spiritual resistance to temptation and overcoming evil with good, by which the Christ was made perfect through suffering. The ideal ends of being which we see from afar, cannot be grasped at once by any eager outstretching of men's hands. There is no miracle to be wrought, even in the name of Christ, for the instantaneous healing of the sin of the world. Real freedom (as St.

[1] Luke ii. 40, 52. [2] Luke x. 18. [3] Matt. v. 48.

Augustine would call perfect holiness and righteousness) is not to be supernaturally wrought, but it is to be graciously achieved. Human redemption is a process of history.

I. The method in which the Christian Ideal is to be made real on earth, is, first, a method of conflict.

In the sinless life of Jesus, spiritual endeavor was necessary every day and hour in order that he might not fail of the truth which was given him from the Father to do. He rose a great while before it was yet dawn. He fasted in the wilderness. He met the tempter with concentration of mind, and instantaneous outgoing of will. In the presence of actual energy of evil the life of the Son of man became a conflict with the evil one.

In the New Testament the conception is clearly gained that evil is not simply a privation of good, or a negative want of godliness, but it is a power of sinfulness, a destructive energy of evil. It is not incidental to life merely, but the evil is an embodied and organized opposition to God in his world; — there is a kingdom of evil — all evil is concentrated and its utmost energy of falsehood put forth in the evil one.[1] Jesus' Messianic working — his cures of many infirmities, his casting out devils, — was moral part and necessity of his whole ethical contest against the kingdom of Satanic might.

Human history shows the solidarity of evil. All sins, however they may tear and rend each other, work together against the good. All evil things gravitate by their own malicious affinities into one mass of corruption. The powers of evil constitute one fearful destructive force against the constructive power of love in God's world. Between these two kingdoms of the good and the evil, there is inevitable and irreconcilable conflict. The battle-field marks this earth, and distinguishes it possibly from all the stars of heaven. Here must be fought through the warfare between passing evil and the eternal love. Our earth — is it in this necessity of conflict alone among all habitable worlds? — trembles beneath the onset of Satanic

[1] Matt. vi. 13; John viii. 44; Matt. xii. 24–28; Luke x. 18; Col. ii. 15, etc.

powers and the coming of heavenly hosts. For our race, and for every individual member of it who lives long enough to hear a note of duty, there is no escape from this world's necessity of conflict. It is morally inevitable alike for humanity as a whole, for the progress of the nations, and for the personal achievement of virtue. All goodness returning heavenward from this earth bears upon it the marks of the fire. There is no other possible purification for it.

When Jesus pronounced the blessing upon the peacemakers, he recognized this necessary law of moral conflict in human history, for he did not say, Blessed are the peaceable; blessed are the amiable; but he used a strong and virile verb, — the same Greek verb which the Scriptures afterwards employ to characterize Christ's own conflict with the evil powers, — and he said, "Blessed are the makers of peace." Peace is a good to be made on earth — it can rarely be achieved save through conflict, — a struggle with one's self, if not with others. The moral warrior may make peace; the blessing of the peacemaker has been won in history through the hard-fought battles of souls, and by the triumphs of truth in the conflicts of the ages.

This necessary law of conflict for the attainment of the promised land by any people, is written largely on the course of history. Israel of old, for example, was compelled to wage exterminating war in order that it might clear a little space for the true religion to find pure air and have room to grow in; Rome must send her legions to all quarters of the known world to establish over barbarian chaos the first principles of law and order; modern history has not been exempt from the same dire necessity; reformers and statesmen, philanthropists and Christians, have had necessity laid upon them to summon armed forces to fields where historic battles for human rights and liberties have been waged; and no man can say that even now the last necessity of combat and bloodshed for the advance of society is passed, and that at length for the triumph of the moral powers in history there need be war no more. Where peace — the peace of a Christian civilization — can-

not be made without war, then war becomes the moral task of a people, and the sacrifice of war their only way of winning for themselves or their children the kingdom which is the promised blessing of the makers of peace.[1]

This law of conflict — always moral and sometimes temporal — which is the conspicuous necessity of the progress of the kingdom of God on the large arena of national life, holds equally as law in all the spheres of human attainment. Moral gain is ever a victory of spirit. Even the progress of the mind in knowledge of truth is to be reached through conflict. In science and in theology every new knowledge or happier faith has been realized through the clash of intellects and amid the strife of tongues. Industrial progress likewise, is an incessant, and often embittered conflict of human interests.

Recognizing, therefore, the necessity of conflict as a general law of the moral process in this world, Christian ethics has further to inquire how far, and by what means, conflict itself may be ethicized in the Spirit of the Christ.

The question arises at this point whether the law of conflict which is admitted to be a necessity of the moral progress of a sinful race, is determined solely by the conditions of pre-existent evil, and can be regarded therefore only as the law of progress of this evil world; or whether, in any sense or degree, conflict may be conceived to be a moral law for any moral world, a general law of all moral life and attainment.

This question is not merely speculative, for it will disclose some direct relations to certain social ideas, which are put forward as the true means by which the highest good for mankind should be sought, and through which alone we may hope for its realization. It is maintained in such social theories that conflict is not a necessary law for a normal social life, and that therefore the method of competition, which is followed in our present industrial organization is to be left behind in the coming world-age.

[1] "Peace without conflict, enjoyment without work, belong to the time of Paradise; history knows both only as results of unceasing, laborious effort" (Ihering, *Der Kampf um's Recht*, s. 4).

Any particular means of conflict which have been used in the struggle of civilization, it may at once be admitted, need not be regarded as essential conditions or necessary incidents of the moral law of good through conflict. Bows and arrows, gunpowder and muskets, artillery of tremendous destructive power, and torpedoes capable of making the earth quake, or even the weapons now in use of industrial warfare, such as strikes, boycotts, or trusts, are none of them, necessarily, indispensable means either of economic progress or of the contest of moral ideas for supremacy over evil. But if we suppose that the methods of conflict were divested of the destructiveness, cruelty, and wrath which accompany them in the collisions of a world where sin and death reign, can we affirm that by the happy loss of all these concomitants of evil, the necessity of conflict itself would be superseded, and some other law of progress be substituted for it? Can we affirm the utter abrogation of the law of progress through conflict in an ideal society or state?

1. In answer to this question it may be observed that so universal a law of life as this does not seem to have been introduced into our moral nature simply as a consequence of sin. To some extent the law of conflict is involved in the necessity for effort, and of effort not only for the exercise of power over nature, but also in the reactions of will against the stimulus of external influences. So far as free moral life is a reaction of inward force against external conditions, an element of conflict is introduced among the vital necessities of the finite moral creation. Even the striving of a pure spirit with God for more knowledge and light, although sinless and blessed, would be of the nature of a conflict; Jacob's wrestling with the angel of the Lord is typical of all moral winning of blessing, although only in a sinful being need there be left the mark of the conflict on the hollow of the thigh. We have not to suppose with the Platonists that the soul contends with some formless and friendless matter, which offers its dark limitation even to the Divine Spirit; but we must find in the primal relation of the finite being to God him-

self the moral condition and necessity for a wrestling of man for the blessing. We may well imagine that in a matured and perfected moral life — the life of an archangel that excels in strength — the glorified spirit shall discover ever new and higher revelations of the divine which will call forth all the energies and flame of its being for their mastery. We may hesitate to assume that the law at least of the mastery of good through effort, which seems thus to be an elemental law of finite moral being, extends only to the imperfect beginnings of a human society, and shall have no farther and higher uses in the kingdom of God. It is conceivable that through the world-ages to come there may be a glad and glorious strife among the blessed as to whom shall be least among them, and the servants of all.

2. We can further conceive how the method of conflict which we have seen to be thus grounded in human nature, may itself be thoroughly moralized and spiritualized. And so far as we can suppose it to be thus fitted for use as a method of the Spirit, we may affirm its continuation and perpetuity as a principle of the kingdom of God. When thus redeemed from selfishness the competitions of pure spirits will be a healthful and free play of life in the stimulus and exercise of all their powers of being. Such conflict will be a striving together of the redeemed in love. It will be emulation undesecrated by ambition. It will be the victory of one to the praise of the other. It will occasion the joy of one in the triumph of another. It will be pure life in the motion and sparkle of its elemental energies. Such perfect life will be like a pure lake with the breeze of heaven on its waters. The kingdom of heaven, or the ideal human society, will thus be conceived as no dead uniformity, no forced governmental equality, no crushing nationalism. Individualism in its highest powers, and its freest play, will enter naturally and heartily into its eager and triumphal life. Perfect life would be dull without such exercise of freedom.

There is no more sublimated conception of material existence than our physical science seeks to apprehend in its doctrine of the interstellar ether. Yet that ethereal

something is assumed as the medium of radiation, as the very rhythm of motions; and the light itself in its pure and vitalizing unity is a competition and harmony of wave-motions. Light, the purest and most spiritualized material existence, may furnish a true analogy of the moral and spiritual sphere of being, the harmony of which shall consist in the fulness of energies that are in constant interplay and interdependence.

It is not competition which is the evil principle of our society, as it is not the rebounding of the atoms which renders nature subject to death. An interruption of the free exchanges of the elements, the concentration of electric forces in some single cloud, may carry tempest and lightnings to the earth; but the free and large competitions of nature's powers in the ample heaven and around the whole earth are beneficent. It is forced and immoral competition, competition subordinated to lust, made the servant of sin, monopolizing competition, which curses the earth. When the method of competition is freed from lust and the grasp of greed, it may bring to us blessings of God from under the whole heavens; happy angels might emulate each other in their ministering flights.[1]

Conceiving of the law of conflict as freed in this manner from the passions of men and the necessities of strife imposed by the hostilities of the kingdom of evil, we may discern how the competitions of righteousness may coëxist with, and be conserved under, another great law of the moral coming of the kingdom of God, which we next proceed to notice.

II. The method of the realization of the Christian Ideal is, secondly, the method of coöperation.

Beginnings of this law of progress may be discovered on what Mr. Spencer calls the "sub-human" plane, in the instincts and habits of gregarious animals. Among creatures that flock together there is observed to come into play a principle of coöperation, in consequence of which

[1] Even when competition is defined in the narrowest meaning as rivalry of two for the same thing, it is not necessarily unmoral, provided it be rivalry under the higher law of love — love guiding the rivalry and using the possession.

the individual receives benefits and avoids evils through its association with others in the flock or herd, and by which also its actions are restrained by "the need for non-interference with the like actions of associated individuals."[1]

In the course of human association and progress of civilization, this law of coöperation slowly yet surely gains extension and power, while, on the other hand, the method of conflict becomes secondary in importance, and circumscribed in its operation. The history of civilization indicates already an immense gain of the action of the principle of coöperation over the action of the principle of competition. The individual, for example, in the civilized state, trusts the community through its organized justice to protect him in the larger part of his personal rights. The progress of civilization might almost be written on this single line as the progress of coöperation. And the Christian Ideal is the ideal of the kingdom of organized love. The competition, such as may remain in a thoroughly ethical state, will be comprehended in, and work together with, its universal charity.

The general mode of the realization of the moral ideal is to be described, consequently, in the terms of a twofold process, as the double action and reaction of the laws of conflict and coöperation, with an evident increase of the influence of the latter and decrease of the prevalence of the former, so that finally only such competition shall be left as may find room and play under the supreme law of love.

The general methods through which the good makes progress towards its kingdom, may be described by the more distinctive Christian words, sacrifice and service. For sacrifice is often the necessity of the Christian conflict with evil, and service is the peculiarly Christian form of coöperation. The way of divine love in our world is known by the sign of the Cross: and apostles of the crucified One wrote themselves down as "your servants for Jesus' sake."[2] These two words, sacrifice and service,

[1] Herbert Spencer, *Justice*, p. 15. [2] 2 Cor. iv. 5.

denote the Christian method of seeking the answer to the Lord's prayer, "Thy kingdom come." These great Christian words draw "transcendent meanings up" from the memories of the martyrs, and the devotions of the heroes of faith, and the daily duties of many of the humble saints of our human homes. But these words, sacrifice and service, mark the way of the Christ through history to his kingdom; they do not describe the kingdom itself, which he shall deliver to the Father. Sacrifice is the means to the Christian end; but the end is life, — the life which abounds.[1] Service is the method of love, but love itself is the end of the service. The supreme good is the reign of love, universal and eternal; the methods through which it is to be gained, are not to be exalted to the good itself which is to be gained; the sacrifice and the service of the Christian man are to be chosen not for their own sake, but in order that the Kingdom of God may come.

The general methods, which we have stated, of the progress of the moral ideal among men, relate mainly to our life in its personal good and social welfare. But man's life stands also over against nature; and if man is ever to reach the ideal ends of his being, he must bring the whole realm of nature into subjection under his feet. The coming of the kingdom of the supreme good needs, therefore, to be still further considered with reference to the domain of nature.

III. The method of the realization of the Christian Ideal in relation to the material world is through the increasing spiritual possession and use of nature.

The law of life has been from the beginning the law of an increasing spiritualization of matter. Life, in all its ascending power, beauty, and worth, has been a continual access of spirit to the creation. There is no profounder or more comprehensive conception of evolution than that afforded by the law of the increasing fitness and service of the material to the spiritual. This conception, which is prevalent in the upper currents of German thought, is the higher truth needed to complete the partial philosophy of

[1] John x. 10.

evolution which has ruled the scientific positivism of English thought. The physical laws of evolution are but methods of nature for the working out of this one continuous spiritual law of its elements and forces. Whoever has once apprehended this higher law of the growth of the material for the spiritual, will refuse to accept any lower and lesser conception of nature as a mere arithmetical sum of elements and processes without reason or end beyond themselves. We should go, however, beyond our present province, should we seek to vindicate the philosophical supremacy of this law of the spirit in nature, and to indicate how it harmonizes and comprehends all the methods of evolution which are known to our science.[1] We confine ourselves rather to some ethical aspects of this increasing subjection of the material to the spiritual, through which the kingdom of heaven draws near.

As means to this subordination of the material elements to spiritual possession and use, the progress of the arts and sciences is to be regarded as having a moral significance, and as contributing to the further realization of the Christian ethical ideal. The husbandman, who uses improved means of agriculture, brings larger fields under the dominion of his will, and his broad harvests are victories of the idea in nature. Every new mastery of the elements by our wisdom is an advance along the way of the redemption of matter by the spirit and for spiritual uses. The subjection of steam to man's will and work was a notable triumph of the kingdom of the spirit. The telephone marks another victory of mind over matter. And nature waits impatient for what further use and mastery by the spirit which is in man! The reign of the ideal is advanced by our sciences and inventions directly by this use of nature for spiritual ends, and also indirectly through the liberation of man's energies for other and

[1] This law of the increasing spiritualization of the natural was followed by Richard Rothe in his *Theological Ethics* with a speculative boldness and freedom almost unparalleled in the history of modern thought. But the law of the increase of the energy of the Spirit in the material world is not to be followed merely in speculative thought; it is a law of historic growth, and as such a fact of observation.

higher employments than the conflict with material conditions. Our humming machinery and multiplying inventions yield more wealth, and make possible also more intellectual and spiritual fellowship throughout the world; they give us not only riches in material products, but also wealth in time saved, labor freed, and opportunity gained for larger and freer exercise of the mental powers. In the Old Testament the workers in metals and in stone, and the carvers of wood, for the Tabernacle and the sacred vessels, were regarded as working with the understanding and inspiration of the Spirit, as well as the prophets and religious teachers of the people.[1] Manual labor, which aims to subject the materials of life to higher uses, is rightly held to possess spiritual worth, and is work to be done with spiritual joy. So to regard all our work, even the lowliest, is not to secularize the religious nature, but to spiritualize the material. All man's work in nature and upon nature is to be wrought in the spirit and for the spirit. This also is the highest law of literature and art. Success must be a consecration. It is not to be attained by mere skill in literary handicraft or artistic touch. The noblest triumphs in literature and art have been won by men whose spirits were consecrated to the ideal ends of their work.

Only as outward possessions and the material wealth of men or of nations, are thus held in subjection to the spirit and for the use of the spirit, are they to be regarded as signs of true progress and means also for the further advancement of human welfare. This body, which is man's first external possession, exists to be made the organ of his spirit; the body is truly possessed only as it becomes pliant and obedient to the spirit which is in a man. Equally true is this of all other possession, or acquisition of external things. They become truly ours only through some spiritual appropriation of them. Wealth is only so much gold so long as it is hoarded; it is a man's capital when he puts himself into it, and makes it his servant, doing his bidding, carrying his thought, working out his ideas, embodying his spirit. It has been happily said

[1] Ex. xxxi. 3–6.

that a man has right to as much property as he can ethicize. Whatever may be a man's legal title to more property than he can put to ethical uses, or make subservient to his will as moral capital working out his own and others' welfare, this saying illustrates the truth that a man really possesses only so much property as he makes his own in a spiritual way; that we really have only what we ethicize; that all else is dead matter, or mere external stuff to us. The only real and permanent ownership of things is in the spirit and by the spirit; all other ownership is apparent, temporal, having no abiding possession. The triumphs of modern science over nature, and the increasing subjection of elemental forces to man's will, as well as the ministry of all lands and climes to our uses, would seem to indicate a rapid progress of humanity towards its ideal welfare along these lines of power. But the progress will be real if the spirit which conquers these outward worlds shall not itself be lost in them. The danger of civilization is its materialization, or the loss of its soul in the abundance of the things which it possesses. As nations increase in wealth, and the lives of men in all their outward conditions become more manifold and prosperous, the supreme ethical question becomes urgent, — How can all this material development be spiritualized? Can this wealth be lifted and held up to the service of the highest that is in man? The moral ideal — the large Christian welfare of humanity — can ultimately be wrought out only by the complete subordination of wealth to soul, of nature to spirit, of mammon to God. Evolution will not have reached its goal until whatever spiritual capacity and intent were involved in nature when the Spirit brooded over chaos, shall have been brought to complete fulfilment. The intermediate state may be natural history; but the beginning and the end of the creation are spiritual.[1]

This inclusion of the spiritual conquest and use of nature in Christian ethics is in harmony with the relation which Jesus maintained in his teaching towards the natural world. To the eye of Jesus nature was always full and fresh with presence of the Spirit. In his parables nature

[1] Rom. viii. 19-22.

was the language of the Spirit. In his teaching nature became a metaphor for the kingdom of heaven. Moreover, the commonest things in men's lives grew spiritually significant to the Christ. And he judged every daily task and duty to be a part of man's spiritual life and destiny.

This spiritualization of common life which characterized Jesus' conversation with men, was definitely taught in the apostolic doctrine. The Holy Spirit is given, not to the chosen twelve only, but to all who will receive it; and it is imparted not for the miraculous gifts of healing only, or for mysterious prophesyings, but for the daily life and conversation of all who walk in the way of the Christ. In the Spirit their whole existence is to be sustained, purified, and made faithful. All the virtues are to proceed from the Spirit. The most familiar acts are to be done as in the dignity and gladness of a spiritual life, — the common meal is to be hallowed with a spiritual blessing. The Christian doctrine of the Holy Ghost, as we have received it at least from the apostles, is not the doctrine only of some marvellous work and special manifestation of God, but the doctrine of the presence and working of the Spirit of Christ in everyday life. The benediction for Christians to take into all their tasks, and to keep in all their love of nature, is the communion of the Holy Ghost.

It has been laid as an objection by some modern writers against Christianity, that Jesus did not use his higher knowledge to teach men a more scientific mastery over natural forces. But it is forgotten by such writers that Jesus' work, which he came from God to do, was to bring men into new births of spiritual life; men need themselves to be spiritualized before they can be trusted with almost divine powers over the forces of the universe. Jesus neither hastened directly, nor retarded, the science which gradually brings nature into subjection to man's will, for he gave his life to bring man himself under the power of the Spirit; and as that chief triumph of the Spirit is won, other and lesser subjection of the world-powers to man may follow. Our present Christian problem is to keep the process of the spiritual conversion and use of power and riches up to the increase of our wealth and possession of the forces of nature. It should be remembered, moreover, that Jesus' mighty works commend themselves to rational belief as manifestations of a higher spiritual mastery and use of nature than men knew, or yet have acquired; and that his miracles, consequently, have a prophetic character as anticipations and signs of a future subjection of all things to the power of the Spirit in the world-age to come.

CHAPTER VI

THE SPHERES IN WHICH THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL IS TO BE REALIZED

THE reign of love, or kingdom of God, on earth is to possess and to fill with good all the spheres of human life. Its progress under the general laws and through the different epochs which have been described, is to be observed further in the particular spheres of men's relationships and activities.

I. It takes possession of and works from personal centres. We have already described the personal nature of the good which is promised in the Gospel of the kingdom (p. 100). The working of the power of the new life in the personal sphere and from personal centres is plainly set forth in one of the most distinctive, and one of the most misunderstood scenes in the ministry of Jesus. Biblical students have usually recognized in our Lord's questioning of his disciples at Cæsarea Philippi a climax and a crisis in his ministry. There at last the truth of his Messianic nature and calling, which had been lying darkly in Peter's soul, flashes into clear consciousness, and in a moment Peter has made the first confession of Christ. We can almost catch across the centuries the tone of spiritual exultation in which the Master receives that great confession: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah!"[1] At last one man knows the Christ. The Lord, looking into the face of that worshipful disciple, perceives that his gospel has at length come home to one man; his Messianic truth is no longer known only to himself and his God, but Simon Peter has received it; Peter's life is aglow with it; and

[1] Mat. xvi. 17.

his Gospel, once having gained possession of a human soul, can never henceforth fail or be lost from the life of humanity. The Church of the Holy Ghost is already founded in one man's soul, and our Lord, looking upon the disciple in whom the truth of his kingdom has come, sees that his Church is founded upon the man with the Gospel in his soul, and is destined in the after-ages to be built upon men with his truth in their lives; and against the man with his Spirit in him, the Lord knows that the gates of Hades shall not prevail.

The words of Christ which follow immediately after this exultant text, make only more emphatic the truth that the first Christian man secures the establishment of the Church which is to be built upon him, and that in his Christian manhood he holds the keys of the kingdom. Peter, the first Christian confessor, has his special place and primacy inasmuch as he was the pronounced beginning and example of the Christian manhood on which the Church of Christ is built, and to him, as the representative and leader of the men in whom truth is to come to its power, the keys of the kingdom are given.

This passage, to which Rome has done ecclesiastical violence, and of which Geneva has been too afraid to see its full, simple truth, is the signal illustration from the Lord's own ministry of the law, that from personal centres, and through the vitalities of personal influence, the kingdom of heaven is to be established on earth. Not the confession, nor the man, but the man holding his confession, is the rock on which Christ built his Church. The Christian man, not his creed, but the man with Christ's truth in him, is in every age the power to whom is given the keys of the kingdom of God. Similarly the apostles find in individual men the living foundation of the kingdom of God. St. Peter himsèlf, remembering perhaps Cæsarea Philippi, yet never thinking of keeping its blessing and its consecration as his own peculiar possession, speaks of Christian men as "also living stones,"[1] which are built up into "a spiritual house"; and St. Paul likewise per-

[1] 1 Peter ii. 5.

ceived that the Church of God was built on the foundation of Christian men, the foundation, namely, of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone;[1] so, also, the pillar in the temple of God, which St. John saw, was not a confession of faith, nor a doctrine, but the Christian man who had overcome the world.[2]

The growth of the apostolic Church shows the same law of the extension of the kingdom along the lines, and by the contacts of personal influence. Around Peter the Confessor, not around Peter's confession, the first Church in Jerusalem was gathered. Apostolic men, to whom the Holy Ghost was given, were at Pentecost the founders of the Christian Church. This law of the increase of the kingdom of heaven on earth through the magnetic contacts of personal influence, and from personal centres of truth, still obtains, and may find its illustration in the course of any reform, the expansion of every large philanthropy, the gathering from any city of the helpful Christian community. We speak sometimes of the power of ideas. But ideas in themselves are but abstractions. Ideas to become powers, must get themselves incarnated in living souls. Ideas become living forces when embodied in men. Leaders of men, as Emerson has said, are "made of the same stuff of which events are made." Unembodied truths, doctrines which have not become vitalized in the hearts of men, are powerless as the moonbeams in the air. When God in history has intended that His truth should press notably on, He has put that truth into a single soul, and the man with that one idea from heaven inspiring him, has become the prophet, the reformer, the great apostle — Abraham seeking a better country: Moses leading Israel from the house of bondage, and bringing the higher law down from the holy mountain; Elijah making the word of the Lord a power in a wicked court; David in the name of his God conquering hosts of Philistines; Nehemiah, with the book of the law open before him, rebuilding and ruling a desecrated city; John the Baptist bringing all Jerusalem

[1] Eph. ii. 20. [2] Rev. 3. 12.

to its knees; and above all, in the fulness of time, Christ himself, who was the Word made flesh, the human Incarnation of the eternal Truth and Love, who redeems man in a living personal way, putting his life into our life, and taking our life into his virtue and power. Always God's method of coming in his kingdom throughout our history has been this personal method, a flesh and blood method of saving men. The last, simplest and permanent testament which the Christ left of his truth, was a personal testament, — the bread and the wine which should signify his flesh and blood, which are given for the life of the world. The Gospel is God's richest and fullest personal communication of Himself to men. It is not a divine state-craft, or governmental aid, or institutional charity; but it is a personal gift, it is the personal power of God with man. The first and the last, the supreme fact of the universe is personality, — God's infinite personality, true as reason, warm as love, eternal as spirit. The second fact in the universe, second and subordinate only, because derived from the first, is also personality, — the moral personality of angels and of men, having reason, capable of conscience, receiving immortality. And the method of all God's gifts and revelations is from person to person; — from his own eternal Fatherhood giving life and being to us in our sonship; then dwelling among us, God with us in the Son of his love; and in this present dispensation of the Spirit communicating his truth and grace from man to man along the lines of our natural relationships, and by the touch and contact of persons who are themselves made alive by his Spirit.

In a living organism the individual cell is the ultimate centre of vitality. Individual cells are organized, it is true, in the "social tissue," to repeat Mr. Stephen's excellent phrase. But the person is the ultimate social cell. Vitality must be kept pure and constant in these ultimate personal cells, or the whole social tissue will break down. Nor can the surrounding tissue of itself save the individual cells from disintegration, if they become diseased. Any remedial treatment of a diseased social organism which

does not renew the cells, revitalizing them, is only temporary good at the best. Christian ethics insists on constitutional treatment of sinful humanity as it seeks to create anew the primal personal cells of the social organism. The kingdom of Christ comes first in the personal centres and personal spheres of life; and then of these renewed souls is to be formed the new humanity of which Christ is the head.

II. The Christian Ideal, working from living personal centres, is progressively to be realized in Christian society.

There is a general social law of the multiplication of the individual life through the community in which it works. The Christian community illustrates this law of the increase of individual power. For the personal influence of the single Christian man is greatly enlarged as it is put into the multiplication-table of the Christian Church. The total Christianity of an age, that is to say, its already realized Christian Ideal, is the gracious multiple of the individual lives of believers. In this Christian multiplication-table of life the least life counts. On the other hand, evil is ultimately divisive and destructive. Temporarily it may be cumulative of power and grow rich in its baneful prosperity. But ultimately evil is a divisive factor of history. It breaks up the social unities. It isolates men. It pulverizes humanity down to its last individual atoms. Christianity has been called an essentially political principle, for it is architectural and constructive. The Christian good grows among men after a law of organic increase. The Christian social tissue is formed by the vital growth and correlations of the individual cells in the one Christian body. In tracing, therefore, the progressive realization of the Christian Ideal we have next to consider the social spheres of its embodiment, and especially the modes of operation which it manifests in these spheres, and the vitalities which it imparts to them.

The spheres of social life should be defined in a scientific method from observation of the existing forms which social development has assumed. A scientific account of the differentiation of social forms is of the first importance in social ethics. (See, on the morphological classification of

social organs, and its sociological importance, a suggestive article by Mr. Dike, *Andover Review*, June, 1890.) In the social organism, certain forms have become distinct and definite in their functions, as are the lungs or the heart in the body; other social elements seem to be general and pervasive, like connective tissue, or the organic matter which is specialized in the several organs of the body. From this "vital stuff" of society, it is not impossible that new organic forms may be integrated in future social development; partially differentiated social forms may be now recognized as in process of formation.

To the first class of definitely differentiated social forms belong the Family, the State, and the Church. These are the social spheres which have furnished the divisions treated of in the older books on social philosophy. Should our social ethics, however, be confined to these three spheres, we should exclude some of the most significant movements of modern industrial life. Recent writers, therefore, have added a fourth social sphere, which they have called the civil community. But this phrase seems at once to be too broad and too narrow; it does not exclude with sufficient precision those civil functions which fall properly within the sphere of the State, and it fails to include some social groups which are gaining coherence within the social body, — such as certain forms of industrial organization and coöperation. We prefer, therefore, to classify social forms under two general divisions according to the determinateness of their differentiation; having thus (1) the primary, fully differentiated organs of society, and (2) the secondary, indeterminate forms of social life. The latter may have more or less definiteness and social stability; and to some extent their functions may be interchangeable. The first are the fixed and permanent forms with non-interchangeable functions.

Our classification determines also the order in which these forms of social life may be arranged. The family was the social organ first developed; it contained within itself, in its earliest formation, both the State and the Church, — the father was both king and priest. After the separation of the political and religious powers and functions from the family, there remains the large and still partially organized sphere of industrial and social life, which may be further differentiated into other specific means and functions of social well-being.

§ 1. THE SPHERE OF THE FAMILY

The family is itself a good, or a factor of moral worth, which enters into and must be perfected in the highest good. The realization of the Christian Ideal will involve therefore the completion and the perfection of the family and of the family-life. But the home, so far as its idea is attained in any age, becomes also a means for the further realization of the ethical ideal. The family is to be regarded, accordingly, in this twofold aspect of it; it is itself to be made perfect as a part of the supreme good,

and also it serves as a present means for the realization of the ideal; it is to be viewed both as an end and as a means of the perfect and final good.

1. The family, like all other objects of moral worth on earth, has had a history and is a historic growth. As no moral good seems to have descended ready-made from heaven, but the gifts of God have been also the ends of human endeavor; so likewise the family was not made perfect in the earliest ages, but has required centuries of social development to gain its present Christian form and purity. The Bible shows us this moral good of the family not at first in its consummate beauty, but only in its patriarchal germ; its holy truth was germinant in the earlier Hebrew customs and laws; gradually it threw off the corruptions of polygamy, emerged from the earthliness of human passions, strengthened itself against the laxities of too easy divorce, and attained in the later Hebrew community and the Christian Church, the purity, permanence, and power of the union of one man and one woman under the blessing of the divine Fatherhood, in which every fatherhood on earth and in heaven is named.

The manner in which the truth of the family and its pure worth were brought out in the course of the biblical history and teaching, illustrates in a very instructive way the general method of the realization of ideal good through the providential development of man's history. For in the present blessing of the Christian home we have one of the worked out results, one of the slowly but thoroughly taught lessons of a progressive revelation. The Old Testament doctrine of the home began in an age of the world which lacked any proper conception of the worth of the individual and his rights; and the first moral lesson taught the fathers of the chosen race of teachers was not the right or value of the individual man and woman, but the place and the power of the Hebrew family in the covenant and promise of Jehovah. One of the first moral lessons of the Old Testament is a family-lesson, — Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca. Judged by our standards, — the Christian standards of the family which have come forth purified from the whole refining process of the history, — those patriarchal families were by no means models of domestic felicity. The example of Rebecca is hardly a happy instance for our marriage ceremony. These were, however, choice examples for their times. They are not good models for us, but they might have been lofty examples of domestic virtue for the Amalekites or for the Sodomites. Moreover, in the Hebrew family, imperfect and polygamous as it was, one great blessing was made secure; for the ambition and

desire of life among those primitive Hebrews became concentrated in the endeavor and the passion to win a family-name, and to survive from generation to generation in the perpetuity of the family inheritance. Not a few incidental facts and social customs to be learned from the Old Testament disclose how thoroughly and firmly the idea of the family, and of the possession of individual life through the family, was implanted in the primitive Hebrew consciousness. The family group in Israel, more than in most primitive communities, "coalesced with the village or communal group." "Neighbor and brother are interchangeable terms for a fellow-Israelite. The return of an Israelite to his village was designated by the Hebrew writers as a return to his family, to the inheritance of his fathers." Even genealogies of persons appear to be "records of the relations of towns."[1] And this emphasis, which from remotest antiquity had been put by the religion of Israel upon the family, and the family-line, not only modified the natural forms of their social institutions, but affected also profoundly and widely the moral ideas and the moral development of the people.

In the establishment of the family as the means of participation in the covenant blessing of Israel, the idea of the position of the patriarch as the head was necessarily made prominent. In a more primitive society, before the Mosaic age, distinct traces of an archaic custom of reckoning descent through the female line have been noticed in the Bible. (Gen. xxii. 20; xxxvi.; cf. Judges ix. 1–3; xi. 1–3.) But the tendencies of the Mosaic legislation and of the idea of the covenant were to bring paternal descent into prominence. The position and honor of the father, as the head of the family, was to be secured as the first condition of a stable family-unit of society. The conception of true fatherhood has to be gained and honored as the basis of further social growth, as well as future revelation of God. Hence the connection of Israel with the covenant, and the promise of Jehovah is through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Messiah shall be the Son of David. St. Matthew's chapter of genealogies is the royal table of male descent. This exaltation of the patriarchal idea in Israel was at first, it is true, accompanied by some degradation of woman, or at least failed to bring out at the same time the true, full idea of womanhood. The patriarch might have several wives. But the idea of the sacredness and worth of womanhood was really involved from the first in the idea of the family, in the perpetuity of which the pious Israelite cherished his hope for the future. Motherhood became a religious expectation in Israel. The children of the Hebrew wife were preferred, while the child of the bondwoman was cast out. The family-idea, which had thus gained in an early age secure and deep root in Israel, brought forth in time as its perfect fruit a pure, and sweet, and lofty conception of woman and the home. In the patriarchal hope the Hebrew family gained a sanctity which it possessed nowhere else in the East. Then the germ of a true family-life having been thus implanted in the promise made to Abraham, the laws of Moses close around it and protect it. The teachings of the prophets purify and hallow it. But the law of divorce given on account of the hardness of men's hearts, has not yet dropped away.

[1] Fenton, *Early Hebrew Life*, § xix.

The commandment of the family-morality is not yet made perfect. The blessing meant for man in the increasing worth and sanctity of the Hebrew family has not yet under the law and the prophets been loosed entirely from ancient imperfections, or freed from all natural evil, and given to mankind in its full and final perfectness. At last a daughter of the house of Israel brings to womanhood the blessing of the Highest.

In the teaching of Christ the temporary expedients and imperfect conditions of the family-blessing are removed; the partial is made complete; and at last, grounded in the essential morality of the law, and built up and cemented by the experience and the historic sentiments of the chosen people, arises the institution of the Christian family. It was a slow, age-long, but successful process by which, under the guidance of providence, so divine a creation as the Christian home was formed and perfected. The history of the formation of a true family begins with the beginning of the biblical story; and when the Bible is a finished revelation, the family also stands forth in its Christian unity and truth as a completed good.

2. The family as a part of the Christian Ideal of man, which has been already realized, becomes a means also for the further realization of the highest good.

The Christian family is chosen and consecrated as a means of grace to the world. In the narrative of the gospels it is interesting to notice how much of Christ's work was done in human homes. Much of his personal influence and teaching proceeded from the homes of men. If we had only the record of his words in the synagogue, or in public places, we should miss many of the most divine portions of his gospel. Jesus sat at meat with publicans and sinners; he entered into the house of the Pharisee, and he went also to Bethany. So the Son of man made the home, and its opportunities, a means of his redemptive grace. The most effective and purest ethical as well as religious influences must always find their abiding place and power in the Christian home. The Christian family is called to take its happy and hallowed place among the great redemptive forces of the world. The virtues which spring up and flourish in the

shelter of Christian homes are the healing virtues of civilization. The marriage covenant has in it virtue to become a means of grace to a community. Every true home is a focus of light and warmth for the social whole. In Christian ethics, therefore, the family is exalted and reverenced not only as an element of the moral ideal which already is finding embodiment in the Christian home, but also as the centre and power of a new and better life for the community; and should any socialistic scheme of collective happiness fail to provide for the sanctity of the family, its success would prove destructive of the fundamental unities from which only a wholesome and happy social state can ever be organized and perfected.

The ethical principle of monogamous marriage is this: No person should be possessed by another as mere means to his life; in the married relation each person should be to the other both means and end of one common life. This principle requires the complete, voluntary losing and finding of life in each other of the husband and wife. In every kind of marriage except monogamy this ethical principle does not come to rightful recognition; the relation of the sexes in such temporary or multiplied relations is not total. But when personality gains its full development and rights, the lifelong union of one man and one woman is the only relation that can be thought of as meeting the full claims and obligations of personality.

Among recent books, the ethical principle of monogamy is well stated by Höffding, *Ethik*, s. 200.

§ 2. THE SPHERE OF THE STATE

The state is the organized form of society. Society may preëxist in an unorganized form before the development of civil institutions. The state may assume exceedingly primitive and simple organic forms in the process of its evolution; but in its organic idea it is the legalized expression and embodiment of existing social relations. The principle of the state has been said to be the idea of right; that idea may be its formative principle: but the existent social relations of men furnish the materials of which, through the idea of right, the state is organized.

In view of this distinction it is apparent that the state, even in its simplest and least organized forms among primitive peoples, is something secondary and derived, not

primary and fundamental. The primal fact is humanity, or the natural social relationship of individual lives. Man in his idea and being is not one, but two; not an atom, but a social unit; not an individual, but a family and a people. The state, as the consequence and formal expression of this human relationship, is always derivative, not primary.

This obvious distinction may furnish the clue also to a right answer to the much debated question, From whence does the state derive its authority? According to two different theories which have been entertained, the state receives its functions and power from the consent of the people, or directly from God. But neither of these theories follows a careful historical induction of the facts which appear in the actual emergence of organized states from archaic social conditions. The idea of a social contract at the foundation of government is a theory long since exploded by more careful historical studies concerning the rise and growth of states. No known social contract lies at the foundation of any organized society.[1] Civil constitutions, it is true, may have been made and ratified by the consent of the people; but some government, some form of social organization, antedates all historical compacts.

If it be maintained, on the other hand, that government derives its authority immediately from God, then the questions remain to be answered, What is the nature or extent of that authority? Who are commissioned to exercise it? Under what forms is it manifested? Grant that all authority proceeds ultimately from God, or that all power in its essential nature is moral power secured in the ethical being of God, the further and practical problem is, What are the social relations which constitute the proper materials for organization in the state, and by what processes, or under what forms, shall these social relations receive authoritative embodiment, and find commanding expression?

In accordance with the distinction just noticed, we should define the state in its general idea as the organiza-

[1] If it be said that this theory is not advanced as an account of the rise of states, but as the true idea of what the state should be, we reply that ideals are suspicious which are not historically evolved.

tion of the social human relations, and the authoritative expression of the rights and duties which are involved in these objective human relations of men to one another, deriving its sanctions from their truth, and having worth so far as it realizes harmoniously these relations. The state is thus to be conceived of as organized society, whose authority is the authority of the whole over the parts, and whose function it is to secure the harmony of all the constituent parts in an outward order of social life. The authority of the state, therefore, is derived immediately from the moral value of the social relations which it organizes. If these are worthless, if these are not to be guarded and developed, the state is an assumption, and all organic laws an illusion. But if these primal relations of humanity have moral worth and are to be brought to their highest possible realization, then the state is invested with their ethical authority, and is itself an ethical end; and also, like the family, it will be an ethical means for further realization of the moral ideal.

Such being its immediate moral worth, it possesses, also, whatever divine sanction and authority may be shown to reside in the original social relations which are brought into organic unity through the state. So far as the matter, if one may so speak, of the state is of divine origination and sanctity, the state also exists in that divine right and power. Holding as we do to the divine constitution of humanity, we must also maintain the derivative divineness of the organization of a people in a state.

This view of the state includes the truths, and escapes the confusions, both of naturalistic theories of the state, and of the once prevalent idea, also, of the divine right of kings. It excludes what is unhistorical and hurtful in those views. It includes the truth of man's solidarity, which struggles for recognition through various socialistic theories of government, while it excludes the frequent socialistic error of regarding the state as having in itself some right or power by means of which it may determine all individual relations of men. This view excludes also the superficial reasoning that the state is nothing but the

collective power of the people, under the limitation of the law of equal freedom indeed, but destitute of any right or authority save that gained by compact or consent, — the extreme individualistic and unhistoric reduction to a minimum of the obligations which social classes owe to each other in the state. We recognize the deeper and diviner truth that there are social relations, determining rights and involving duties, which exist before any individual choice, and lie beneath all civil contracts, and have in themselves the ethical worth and divine authority of a moral creation for a moral end. "The state," says Dorner, "like wedlock, is neither immediately God's work, nor something profane, but it is a human product on divine ground, and so has in itself a divine and a human side."[1] In this conception we may find also the right mean between the absolute theory of the sovereignty of the state, which Hobbes inculcated, and the liberalistic view of the state represented by Locke. The proper field and true limits of the sovereignty of the state can be determined by this derivation of its primal authority from the human social relations, with their implied rights and duties, which existed before the organization of the state, and which cannot be superseded by the state. The sovereign state differs from all other forms of social organization, from any merely individual associations of men, in the fact that it is the sole comprehensive, organic form of human relationships; and as such, having been immediately derived from these relations, and being the original, formal principle for the social material, the state is set over all other societies, and holds authoritative primacy among them.

The limitations also of the sovereignty of the state are given in the same primary, social relations from which its authority is derived. The sovereignty, and the limitations of the sovereignty, are alike determined in the same social constitution of humanity. The state has sovereignty to conserve, and to bring to free realization these primal, social relations of men; it has no sovereignty to destroy

[1] *System der Christ. Sittenlehre,* s. 509.

them. By any invasion of the human rights from which it derives its authority, it would cut itself off from its own source of authority. It would by so doing contradict itself. It has sovereignty only in its fidelity to the life from which it comes, in its constant truth to the relations of that life which it organizes and legalizes. Whenever, therefore, the state assumes power to destroy essential and integral functions of the lives of individuals, it violates its own law, and in behalf of its rightful authority it is to be resisted. In other words, the law of the whole body finds both its authority and its limits in the relations of the parts which it is to hold together as members one of another through its organizing and regulative power.

The limitations of the possible activity, as well as of the sovereignty of the state, for the supposed general welfare, may likewise be found in this conception of the nature of the state. The state is constituted, so it is argued by one school of publicists, in the idea of right, and in that idea only; it can exercise consequently no authority over human affairs, except within the limits of that one constitutive principle. To protect men in certain rights is the sole and entire function of the state. This theory Lassalle ridiculed as the "night-watchman" idea of the state. The power of the state is reduced to a scanty figure when the conception of it is exhausted in the person of a policeman. But, on the other hand, the paternal idea of the state has been carried to the socialistic extreme. The function of the state seems to be expanded beyond all reason when it is conceived of as a guardian angel, which is to accompany and direct, with perpetual oversight, individual efforts and pursuits. The fallacy in both these conflicting conceptions concerning the extent of the functions of the state, resides in their failure to determine inductively what are the primary social relations which constitute the proper material to be organized under the formative authority of the state. The scope and the limitations of governmental action and non-interference are to be found in the nature of those primary human relations which lend, and which do not lend, themselves to organi-

zation and administration through law and under the forms of legal institutions. Nor is it difficult in general to draw the line of demarcation through all these human relations between what is proper material for, and what lies beyond the organizing power of the state. It is determined by the distinction between that which is immediately personal, and only indirectly social on the one hand, and that which is directly social and indirectly personal on the other hand. Activities, which are immediately the concerns of free personal life, can become only secondarily, and as they affect others, affairs of society, and hence matter of social organization through the power of the state. Functions, on the other hand, which are directly social, and which react on the individual freedom, are the immediate matter of society, and hence of organization under the laws of the state. This distinction indeed is not absolute, as all life is at once individual and social; but, broadly speaking, this distinction marks off with practical plainness the one side of life, which the state should lay hold of for its legitimate ends, from the other side of life, which properly escapes from the control of the state. Practical statesmanship must judge in each particular instance of proposed legislation just where this distinction runs. Practical ethics in politics will incline to the night-watchman or to the paternal idea of government, according to the nature and range of the social relations and activities which it may be proposed to bring within the domain of positive law. Substantially the same distinction will be gained, if we consider the end of the state as a sphere of action in which the moral ideal is to be brought to still further realization. For that moral end or that part of the moral good which can be realized through the organization of the human social relations in the civil body, will also define its proper sphere of activity, while those parts of the moral good which do not admit of realization through social organization in the state will determine the limits of its functions. Those human relations which are usually designated under the term, the rights of men, belong to that portion of the social good which is to

be realized through the state. Further, many activities of men in common enterprises and for aims of a common prosperity which cannot be reached through private efforts, at least not so well, may be included in a social ideal which must be sought through combined efforts; and consequently they may constitute an organic end for the state, and hence open a field for the possible exercise of its power. But here the line begins to shade off, and only a careful induction of facts can determine in many instances, what are elements of the moral good beyond the reach of individual enterprise, but within possible attainment by the social body as an organic whole. If the end of the state be defined indeed in terms simply of right, and not in an ideal conception of that portion of human welfare which may be attained through legal organization; then, of course, any socialistic action of the state would be necessarily excluded. But a profounder and more historic conception of the end of the state, which includes within its legitimate province such human welfare as cannot be realized except through social organization and under collective forms, will not refuse to admit any socialistic legislation which experience may prove to be conducive to the good of the whole, while not destructive of the primary individual relations and functions of human life and activity.[1]

From the view of the origin and nature of the state which we have thus gained, the answer becomes apparent to the further question how far the state may be regarded, as the puritan poet conceived of it, "as one huge Christian personage, one mighty growth or stature of an honest man"? Milton's moral conception of the state would be disputed by the school of *laissez faire* economists who

[1] Paulsen suggests that a reconciliation of conflicting theories of the functions of the state may be found in a *real* as distinguished from a formal conception of freedom; that is, "the real possibility for every individual to live as an end to himself," etc. (*System der Ethik*, s. 801). So far as the regulation of social relations by the state may be necessary in order that individual freedom in its real contents, as well as formal idea, may be attained, the state is more than an institution of rights. On the formal nature and the necessary limits of the productive activity of the state, see also some excellent remarks in Höffding's *Ethik*, ss. 431 ff.

find the sole occasion and only legitimate scope for civil government in the necessity of protecting equal freedom and securing the stability of contracts. But Milton's conception has this advantage over these economists, that it is historical, and is true to the ideas of the state which have become embodied in the modern nations. As matter of fact, nations are moral personalities, having ethical character, and holding themselves under moral responsibilities. Their ethical ideas may be imperfect and the government of a people may often fail to correspond as it should to the moral spirit of the people; nevertheless, a certain moral individuality characterizes each nation, and is worked out in its history. To deny ethical quality to the state would be to rob it of that character which often, more than all external possession or might, has held the devotion of the people, and been the inspiration of the highest patriotism. The spirit of a nation, pervading its institutions and revealing its power in the great crises of its history, constitutes and consecrates the true moral personality of the nation. While Milton's conception holds true of the actual state as it is known in history, the opposite idea of a merely legal machine, devoid of soul, and without moral responsibility, is an invention of publicists — a mere idol of the school — which has never had actual existence in the world.

The moral character of a state results directly from the ethical nature of the social relations which are to be organized and adjusted in the constitution and laws of the civil body. For these are relations of men to men, and as such are more than economic harmonies, and cannot be emptied of moral reality. The social tissue, in other words, which exists to be worked up in some organic form of civil government, is moral tissue, composed not only of economic fibres and fatty material of wealth, but also of vital elements, and the quick nerves of human sympathies and reciprocities. Since the social tissue itself contains moral elements, and is ethical so far as it is living human tissue, any further organization and correlations of it in civil constitutions and laws must possess essentially the same moral

character as the original substance from which such institutions are formed.

The moral character of the state is also to be affirmed when we consider the ends for which the state exists. Even on the most tenuous theory of its aim, — that of the maintenance of free contracts, — some moral character can hardly be denied to the state; for it must have virtue enough at least to recognize the maintenance of free contracts as a good, or at least as a necessary means to the sum of individual happiness, which is regarded as the good to be desired. If, however, our theories go farther and correspond to the actually existent forms of civil organizations of society, they will include in their scope such moral ideas as governments practically attempt to realize, not only in the maintenance of certain formal rights for the individual, but also in the creation of those social conditions which are necessary for the development of his free personality, or conducive to his attainment of the personal and material welfare which is the aim and end of his being.

Ethics, therefore, must include as a part of its science the problems of moral statesmanship. Christian politics is a part of Christian ethics.

Recognizing thus the fact that governments have moral responsibilities, and consequently that political questions may fall within the province of Christian ethics, we have further to inquire whether the state may also be said to have religious character and aims; whether in Christian ethics the state may be regarded also as a Christian institution.

A definite religious character of the state cannot be inferred directly from its possession of moral functions or aims, unless, indeed, we confuse moral and religious ideas. We must admit the possibility in the individual of a moral development which may not be consciously or formally religious, whatever religious implications we may hold are latent in any moral growth.[1] So the life of a people may be conceived as taking on moral functions and realizing

[1] See above, p. 16.

certain moral ends without coming to distinct religious consciousness, or acquiring definite Christian character. But as the life of the individual cannot come to its full moral attainment without some disclosure of his religious being and end, so the organization of the collective life of a people in the state involves eventually some realization of the religious consciousness of a people, and a social order which shall exist in some acknowledged relationship to the higher law of heaven. Historically, the nations have had their religions. The ancient peoples had their state religions; and Rome under its most moral emperor, Marcus Aurelius, could persecute an illicit religion. And when, as in some modern states, the civil and religious functions are kept separate, the state, nevertheless, recognizes the existence of religion and seeks to adapt and harmonize its constitution and laws to the religion, or religions of the people.

What the more specific obligations of the state to religion may be, we reserve for subsequent discussion; — in this chapter we are laying foundations for the succeeding chapter on duties. We maintain now in general that a certain religious relation and character must eventually distinguish the developed state; a general Christian spirit and temper must distinguish the state which is organized in the consciousness of a Christian people, so that the further and special marks, functions, and obligations of this religious character of the state may properly be made matters for inquiry and determination in Christian ethics.

It should be noticed that this whole question, whether a state may have a religion, is a modern question. It was unknown in the ancient cities and would not have been raised by Aristotle or Plato. The state, or the city, being according to the ancient conception supreme — the one sphere of life inclusive of and sovereign over all others — there could be no conceivable development of human life outside of the state and foreign to it. Hence, since man is a religious as well as social animal, the state must to some extent express and regulate his religious as well as his social nature. Similarly Hobbes represents the state as having jurisdiction over religion by reason of its sole supremacy over all the spheres of life; the state, as sovereign, should prescribe the order of worship, and the individual may rightly hold no religion, or no public form of religion, except in harmony with and by means of the provided religious order of

the state. There can be no king but Cæsar; a worship outside the order of the state, or an assertion of individual allegiance to any higher power than the state allows, is not to be tolerated, for it is subversive of the sovereignty of the state, to be exterminated, therefore, through persecution by the emperors. Polycarp, who cannot swear by Cæsar as Lord, must drink the cup of martyrdom.

Christianity created an empire within an empire, raised a Christian sovereignty above all human allegiance, and refused to place its spiritual kingdom at the command of the powers of this world. Christianity requires that the state in its functions and aims shall recognize and make room for the good which is its ideal, and which it is striving to make real on this earth. It refuses to be subject in its ideals and spiritual loyalties to the state, while at the same time it strives unceasingly to embody its spirit in the laws, and to reflect its moral light in the institutions and administrations of civil government.

The task of ethicizing and Christianizing all civil institutions is the practical politics of Christian faith. Politics is more in Christian ethics than it was, or could have been, in Aristotle's discussion of the forms of government, or even in Plato's dream of the republic. For we are called by the existing status of governments, as well as by the voice of their history, and the hopes of their future, to consider what civil institutions and what laws shall best answer the Christian possibilities of the life of a people, and bring to clearer and happier actualization the idea of the Christian society which goes before our civilization. It is not merely some ideal form of possible human government, whether of constitutional monarchy or democracy, but it is the ideal of a Christian society to be realized on earth, which is the large, inspiring idea of the progress of the Christian nations. Each state in the Christian world, under the influence of Christian ideas, as it strives however imperfectly to realize in its sphere the Christian life of the people, is compelled to go beyond and beneath all formal questions concerning its institutions, and to seek to steep its laws in Christian ethics. And beyond the ethicizing of individual states, and the reception by them of the baptism of the Spirit of Christian history, the further problem remains of Christianizing the relations of the nations to one another, or the Christian ethicization of international law.

The mutual relations of states are no longer to be determined simply by commercial interests, nor can their reciprocities remain entirely economic, and different peoples meet each other only with their tariffs at the world's common commercial table. The contacts between nations are also ethical, and their religions as well as their commerce meet on every shore. The world is becoming a general assembly of those "huge moral personages" of Milton's noble conception. As these international relations become means thus of moral and spiritual communion between peoples, international laws also should become more powerfully representative of these higher moral reciprocities, and express ultimately the world's most ethical cosmopolitan consciousness. Without forfeiting their identity, or losing their national individuality, the kingdoms of this world are called to become, in the spirit of their international laws, the kingdom of the Lord and his Christ.

§ 3. THE SPHERE OF THE CHURCH

From the ethical point of view, the Church is to be regarded as an embodiment, in some measure, of the Christian Ideal, — a partial attainment already on earth of the highest good; and also, by its imperfect realization of the Christian Ideal, it presents further ethical problems which are to be worked out in the history of the Church to better solutions.

1. The formative ethical idea of the Church.

Jesus came preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God; he looked upon that kingdom not merely as something to come from heaven at some future day, but as a kingdom already begun in the company of his disciples. The apostolic institution of churches was the continuation and fulfilment of Jesus' teaching concerning the kingdom of heaven on earth. That kingdom was in some sense already come in the first Christian Church. Its full idea was far from realization; the kingdom had not fully or finally come in the imperfect beginnings of the Christian Church; but in the Church of Christ the kingdom of heaven had become an established fact on earth, and, however imperfectly, it

showed that there was a real presence of the Spirit in a communion of believers.

The Church, therefore, as the coming of the kingdom, is to be a visible embodiment of its Spirit, the organized and institutional presentation on earth of its gospel. Especially are the ethics of the kingdom of heaven, both individual and social, to be made real and controlling in the Christian Church.

In this idea of the Church as the ethical realization, as well as religious continuation, of the gospel of the kingdom, the following particulars are involved: —

(1) The Church is to be composed of Christian persons. Christian individuals, making personal confession of the Christ, are the units of whom the Church is organized. The Christian person is the constituent unit of the Church.

(2) Christ is himself the central and supreme principle of the Church. It is to be organized around Him. It is constituted in Him. It is the body of which He is the head. No company of disciples by themselves constitute a church. Not unless Christ is in the midst of his disciples does the Church exist.

(3) In the Church is presented the Christian idea of society. The individuals who constitute the organic units of the Church are bound together, through their union with Christ, in a renewed society. The social relations between men, and classes of men, take on new forms, are pervaded by another spirit, and begin to assume a higher completeness in the communion of the body of Christ. The Church stands thus for the idea of a regenerated society. Its present existence is the Christian pledge of the future perfected Christian society. So far as the Church has made real the gospel of the kingdom of heaven on earth, it is more than the sign of individual election or salvation, and more than a prophecy also of some heavenly world; it is, or should be, the embodiment and presentation in flesh and blood among men of the true Christian idea of social life.

(4) The society, which is already partially formed, and which is still further prophesied in the Church, is consti-

tuted in a higher or gracious power. It is a society organized from above, and having its life in a power which it receives from above. It is not a spontaneous generation, or self-organization of humanity. It is a new birth of humanity by the power of the Holy Ghost. The Church, as the embodiment of the Christian idea of society, is itself the creation of the Christian principle of life. It is organized in the name of Christ, and by the power of his Spirit, as the morally true society in which all social relations are to find normal development, reach perfect adjustment and harmony, and escape from the waste and destruction of sin. It is a human brotherhood proceeding from the divine Fatherhood. It is a human society inspired by a common love; and that love, which is its unity, is essentially religious. It is love from God and to God, in which the love also of one's neighbor has its birth and life. The Church stands thus as the gracious (and hence most natural) form of human society, — the true society, that is, which has its life in God. The Church represents human society in the highest. Ideally it does this.

Hence the formative ethical conception of the Church (not considering now its ecclesiastical organization) may be broadly and briefly described as the Christian social ideal. A renewed and perfected society of men is the idea to be embodied, progressively realized, and finally perfected in the Church of the Son of man.

The expectation of the Church — the ideal ever shining before it — is the vision of the city of God. This ideal of a perfected Christian society has risen before the builders and founders of churches; it has led on the greatest movements of missionary power; it has produced reformations within the Church; it redeems and ennobles pages in church history which otherwise might seem dark, narrow, and intolerant. The Church of God stands always before an apocalypse. It gazes into a sunset glory. And the resplendence of its vision of the future beautifies and glorifies much that is imperfect and unattractive in its present. As a landscape, which in itself may not seem attractive, is rendered pleasing to the eye, — even the

barren wintry fields, the misshapen rocks, the homely farmyards, and the storm-twisted trees of a northern New England country-side, becoming fair and bright, as one looks over them into a sunset glory, and the warm splendors of the sky light up the earth beneath it, — so the puritanism of the Church, and many customs and traditions in themselves unsightly and repulsive, have been dignified and made lustrous by the glory of the ideal in which the whole seemed to be transfigured. It is unhistoric and untrue to look at many scenes in past church history without lifting one's eyes to the idea of a purer and more celestial society which men, unwisely it may be, and ineffectually, but nevertheless with hearts looking heavenwards, have sought to bring down to this world.

There has been in recent times a revival, or at least a clearer and intensified conception, of this ethical idea of the Church as the realization in the world of the true society.[1] The Church in its ethical idea is for humanity. Individuals may belong to a church because the Church in its idea belongs to all men. Like the Sabbath the Church was made for man, not man for the Church; for the Son of man is Lord also of the Church, as he is of the Sabbath. The Church stands for a human good, and is essentially an institute for humanity. As such the Church is not to be regarded simply as a means for an end, a useful means for an end of human redemption beyond itself; it is itself an end. So far as in the Church of Christ social relations are regenerated, and social truth has been embodied in its communion, the Church is a moral end, and its completion becomes a part of the attainment of the final perfect good for man.

In this conception of it the Church is and must be something universal in its scope and form. For, as a human end, realizing a human good, the Church cannot be a limited or particular form of social life, a temporary and transitional mode of human life; but it must have mean-

[1] This conception was the idea of the Church for all men to which Frederick Denison Maurice was drawn with a resistless attraction, and which his life and writings have helped restore to the Christian world.

ing and worth for all men as a final attainment of the perfect social good. The universality of the Church, in other words, is involved in its original and formative idea as the true and perfect conception of a human fellowship which shall be organized in the communion of men with God. As the home and the life of the household are constituted in the relation of the children to the father, so the Church is the oneness of men in God; the Christian Church is the fellowship of humanity in the communion of Christ who makes known the Father.

Moreover, as an end in itself, as a part of the *summum bonum* to be attained in the perfected life of humanity, the Church is separated from all merely voluntary associations, and from any transitory, accidental, or convenient forms of social life. Its authority resides in the essential good which is involved in its idea — the good for man, ordained of God, which is to be attained and revealed in and through the Church. Its reason for being is given in the moral truth that human society is to be constituted after a divine order. The Church is, and must be, because God is, and man, made in a divine image, can reach his highest end only in a humanity which shall be perfected through the Spirit of God. We need not therefore seek for the social warrant and authority of the Church in the letter of any Scripture, or search for its living foundations simply in some historic word of Christian institution. It is necessarily and supremely the continuation of the work of the Son of man, who is the Son of God. It is essential to *His* humanity that it shall complete itself in the true humanity of all his brethren. It is essential to his perfected union with the Father that he shall give his Spirit to the Church which is his body. The Church is thus the natural and continuous manifestation of the divine humanity of Christ.

It follows further that the Church, as a part of the human good to be realized, and hence as a universal form for human life, is not to be bound by particular modes of confession or orders of administration. Without loss of its inward principle it may take different forms, and assume

varied adaptations among different peoples according to the spirit and genius of different nationalities.[1] In its principle the Church is for all nations; the forms of its ceremonial may depend in part upon the climate. National genius may enter as a determinative factor in its order and administration. The civil institutions of a country may modify the constitution of the Church and give shape and color to its ecclesiastical law. An idea, which is in itself universal, may become localized, and be known by local signs and emblems. Patriotism, which is a human sentiment, may follow different flags in different countries; and even in the same country, under the one national banner, patriotism may be intensified by attachment to a corps badge or the regimental colors. Indeed universal truths need often to take on local form and color in order to command men with full devotion. But under these special forms, and even denominational colors, the idea of the Church as a universal truth for man is not necessarily contradicted, and should never be lost. The deadly sin of schism lies ethically, not in any non-conformity, nor in independency of some existing church organization, but in the contradiction either in spirit, or by ecclesiastical methods, of the universality of the idea of the Church. Denial of this universality of the Church may be made not only by a schismatic spirit, but also by a refusal to admit the law of development in the Church. For, if the Church in its idea is universal, then in its historic form it must manifest growth; it will be a progressive realization of the idea of the kingdom of God; and its life will show a law and power of true development. To contradict this truth of its development is to deny the ethical fitness of the Church for a final and universal human good. To hold the idea of the Church in absolute identification with any existing order, or outward form which it has historically assumed, would involve a denial of the vital principle of its possible development into universality.

[1] This does not touch the ecclesiastical question concerning any alleged signs of its outward historic continuity — a question beyond our present province.

The reality of the Church on earth is always something partial and limited; its idea is always something catholic. The Church in its actuality is a definite number of men living and working together in a partially renewed society; the Church in its ideal is a universal humanity, redeemed and harmonized in the unity of the kingdom of heaven.

This universality of the idea of the Church proceeds directly from the nature of its Lord as the Christ for the world. It comprehends human life in all its activities and relations, for the catholic Church is to be the Church of the Son of man. There can be but one universal Church, as there can be but one true realization of the idea of society, even the Christian society. All churches, established, national, denominational, belong to the one true Church only as they share in, and reflect, and are becoming contributary to, this one final and perfect form of the Christian society whose head is the Christ.

This universality of the Church, even in its final perfectness, may not necessarily exclude diversities of forms, but it will comprehend all varieties of organization in some evident and controlling unity of formative principle and spirit. Though having many members, and divers ministries, the Church will be ultimately one body, the redeemed body of humanity, of which Christ is the head.

The nature of the Church as the religious social ideal, which we have thus been considering, will serve to correct and to exalt a common, but low, conception of the social functions of the churches as simply a means of good fellowship among men. For the office of the Church is not merely to minister to sociability, as many voluntary associations may legitimately do; but the social idea of the Church goes deeper and higher, and is broader than that; it is its aim and end to realize the true form of human society, and to manifest in its fellowship the full, redeemed social life of man.

2. We have next to determine the relations of the Church to other institutions in which the moral ideal is to be realized.

(1) Its superiority to all voluntary associations for the promotion of social ends has just been noticed. The Church is a fundamental form or essential type of the Christian society, having its sanction in the Christian idea of humanity which it seeks to bring to progressive realization.

(2) But it is not necessarily exclusive of other temporary organizations, which may be useful means for social ends. The Church, as embodying in itself the social aims of man, may justify, consecrate, and use as means to the society which it would create anew, various other associations, comradeships, and alliances of men. Their chief ethical reason for being lies in their practical justification as means to the end of the Christian society. Charitable and philanthropic and even religious societies may exist entirely outside the Church, serve their temporary ends, and give place to others; or these societies may be taken up by the Church into its own organized activities and used in its work as means to the further achievement of its full Christian idea. The Church is the body, of which these philanthropies may be the hands and the feet. Charities fail of the best and most abiding results without this body-idea of the Church; and the Church without charities is in turn as a body without arms. The idea of the Church, consequently, in its adaptation to the environment of men's needs, is becoming more and more the idea of an institutional church, or a church which, by its grouping around it of practical instrumentalities, shall show itself to be a divine institute for humanity. Such practical organization of churches for a large and varied ministry indicates a hopeful line of the further development of the true idea of the Church in the immediate future.

3. We pass next to the debated question of the relation of the Church to the State. Obviously the State will hold a different relation to the Church than that sustained by any voluntary association of men for social ends; for the State like the Church cannot properly be regarded as a voluntary organization, but is itself a necessary form, at least in this present world-age, of human society.

We have already discussed the idea of the State and determined its fundamental principle. As a necessary form of certain social relations which antedate all contracts, and which are too constitutive of humanity and too vital to be left dependent on the volitions of men, the State, we have seen, possesses the authority of the social nature of man from which it immediately proceeds, and hence also a divine sanction, at least in the eyes of those who believe that human nature is constituted in some divine idea, and according to the eternal law of God's reason.

We have thus recognized two necessary forms of society; two organs of the collective life of a people have become differentiated in the development of the modern nations. But from this dualism of Church and State arise conflicts of authority. Two powers, each claiming to be ordained of God, have met in perpetual debate, and often in armed oppositions, — the civil and the ecclesiastical.

No such conflict was known to ancient history. The state, or the city in Greece was sole sovereign. All religion was state-religion. There was no empire within empire, nor city of God within the city of man. The Roman state was practically the church also; the Cæsar was the *pontifex maximus*. In the primitive Hebrew religion, likewise, there was no separation, and no conflict, between these two spheres of rights and duties. The lawgiver was the prophet and priest. Moses represented the unity of all the powers of law, leadership, and religion, when he came down from Sinai with the tables of the commandments in his hands, and the veil drawn over his face. Later Judaism witnessed a separation, becoming tragic at times, between the prophets and the kings; and the priesthood eventually grew to be a distinct order; yet in the Messianic ideal the priest and prophet were conceived as also the king.

This conflict between Church and State belongs to Christian history and is a result of the establishment of a kingdom which is in the world but not of it. Christianity has organized the Church within the State and asserts its spiritual independence of the State. Hobbes put modern society under an ancient and no longer possible conception, when he asserted the sovereignty of the State in religion. For no Christian nation can revert wholly to State-Cæsarism; Christianity owns the two kings, — the Cæsar in his

domain, and also it must confess only the Christ in his kingdom. An inward and spiritual authority of the divine sovereignty might indeed be acknowledged without necessary collision with the outward authority of the state; as the state likewise might exercise no power over the souls of its subjects. But the actual case is not so simple, for in the Church this inward sovereignty is brought to visibility, made concrete and definite in ecclesiastical institutions, and hence brought to the notice of, and often thrown into collision with, the secular sovereignty of the state.

The many different relations which these two powers, the civil and the ecclesiastical, have assumed under different governments and in widely divergent forms of church administration, only serve to show how extensively and how deeply this dualism runs through the life of the modern Christian nations. But science is impatient of dualistic conceptions in nature, and Christian ethics is impelled to raise the question whether this separation between these two fundamental forms of modern life, the Church and State, is to be permanent, or whether, indeed, such dualism is consistent with the Christian ideal of society which the Church carries in its heart.

We cannot look on such divided authority as a sign that that which is perfect has come. Whether we can conceive of a final harmony between these two opposite authorities, the one civil, and the other spiritual; or whether we may be able to discern the next steps towards some future reconciliation between them, we must regard this division of modern life between two powers, and its subjection, although in different spheres, to a double sovereignty, as something in its nature temporary, and destined to pass away when that which is perfect shall come. Diversities of organs may remain in the perfected society, but not confusion of functions or possibility of conflict of authority.

Unity of these powers of modern society cannot be wrought by violence. Persecution for religious opinion would now be an anachronism. It was always a moral blunder. The State cannot take by violence the kingdom of heaven; neither can the Church put civil freedom under

bonds. History has closed permanently these two ways, — the way of bringing Christ before the judgment seat of Cæsar to be crucified, and the way of putting Christ on Cæsar's throne to rule the kingdoms of the world. Comte was right in regarding the separation of civil and religious powers as one of the great gains of modern history.

How, then, shall this fundamental social antinomy of civil and religious authority be resolved? (1) We may conceive of either power as ultimately absorbed in the other. Such unity would not be the forceful subjugation of the one by the other, but rather the fulfilment of the one in the perfection of the other. An ultimate coincidence of Church and State may be conceived of in two ways as we suppose the State or the Church to become the final form of social life. The State may be conceived of as becoming itself religious, so that the Church shall pass into the State. According to this mode of conceivable unity a theocracy would be the Christian goal of history. The State is to be Christianized and spiritualized. There will then be no further need of a separate church for the religious life of the people. The perfected Christian State will comprehend religion as one of its necessary functions. Worship would then be the confessed and legitimate duty of the state. The perfected state, as well as the perfect individual, cannot be conceived as existing without religion; hence worship will be the natural posture and act of the true and complete state. All that the Church in its separation from the civil body has striven to attain will be realized in the one true State, which will be the religious society of humanity in its single and complete organization and administration. The Church will therefore fall away, having accomplished its task and Christianized society.[1]

[1] This was Rothe's view: "That general state-organism must be conceived as essentially, at the same time, the entirely perfected kingdom of God, as the absolute theocracy (reign of God). But then also the religious-moral communion, and that which in its sphere is exclusively religious will coincide absolutely with it, and the Church accordingly will fall absolutely away." — *Theol. Ethik*, sec. 449. Some of the soberer writers on socialism leave open a similar religious possibility in their imaginative descriptions of the social state. Thus Schäffle observes that in socialism "public support of the church is

One might start from the other factor, the Church, and reach by the opposite way a similar conclusion. The Church as the organ of the highest human fellowship, and as carrying in itself the idea of a human brotherhood in consequence of the Divine Fatherhood, may be conceived as taking up into its influence sphere after sphere of human life, and as subordinating all things to its control, until at last the State subsides into the Church, and the Church as the sole sovereignty over humanity issues from the long conflict of history as the perfected kingdom of God. Yet such has not been the course of modern history since the reformation and the rise of the modern nations. The signs at present are not pointing that way.

The temporal power has departed from Rome, and Protestantism has not succeeded in moulding even the religious life of a single people to the forms of one national Church.[1] Moreover, it is proverbial that ecclesiastics make bad rulers; the state, without loss of the greatest historic gains, could not surrender the liberties of men to ecclesiastical power, thereby itself committing suicide in behalf of the residuary interest of religion in society.

(2) A middle way of reconciliation may be conceived, in which the Church shall be left free as an organ of the religious life, but be held by the civil power in co-ordination with all other organs and functions of the social life. In this conception these powers, the civil and the religious, may be said to be subordinated, neither of them to the other, but both to the organic unity of the whole society.

This is the conception of organic unity which Professor Edward Caird puts forward in opposition to Comte's separation of his priesthood of humanity as an independent power: "And organic unity, though it does not mean any special form of government, means at least two things: in the first place, that each great class or interest should have for itself a

possible, although not very probable." — *Quintessenz des Socialismus*, s. 63. He supposes as another alternate possibility for religion in the reign of collectivism, that voluntary societies for spiritual objects may be instituted; but he fails to show how these are to be adjusted and supported in harmony with other socialistic conditions.

[1] Maurice's high conception of the national Church is not prophetic because it is not historic.

definite organ and should therefore be able to act on the whole body in a regular and constitutional manner, so as to show all its force without revolutionary violence; and, in the second place, that no class or interest should have such an independent position, as to exclude every legal or constitutional method of bringing it into due subordination to the common good" (*The Social Philosophy of Comte*, p. 246). But what in this conception is the organizing principle, what the one organic form? Really the ultimate principle is the idea of social good to be secured through the civil power, so that ultimately in this form of unity the Church is subordinated, although as a complete organ, to the State, which is the one organic form of social life.

This mediation between the civil and ecclesiastical authority may be practically attempted in two ways — through a national Church maintained by the State as the organ for the religious life of the people with guaranteed independence in its own sphere; or by a free church in a free state. The former method of mediation is the historical compromise between the civil and ecclesiastical powers which in some form of it has been gained by most modern nations; it cannot be claimed, however, that by it a condition of stable equilibrium has been reached. Our present purpose requires us, however, only to note the fact (without discussing any of the questions involved in it) that established churches do not escape all conflicts of jurisdiction, and the shadow of possible disestablishment lies across their future.

Neither can it be claimed that a condition of stable equilibrium has been reached where a free church exists in a free state. We have in this relation of these two powers, as in other historical compromises between them, only a *modus vivendi*, not a permanent or ideal harmony. There is a border-land still left between the domain of the free state and the province of the free church, where incursions from the one side or the other may provoke new conflicts of authority. Indications of this dualism, which still exists in the freest modern societies, may be found in the questions which repeatedly arise concerning marriage laws, the Bible in public schools, the observance of religious forms on state occasions, and provisions for the religious benefit of bodies under state control such as the army and navy, or the penal and reformatory institutions of the land, and

even with regard to the proposition of taxing church property, like other property, for the benefit of the state.

Such taxation is resisted on the part of a free church not merely on the ground that it is a benevolent institution which may be exempted from certain public burdens because it renders a public service, but also, and more fundamentally, because even a free church in a free state will be slow to acknowledge dependence on the state in any manner which might threaten its existence, or which might imperil its rightful sovereignty on its own ground. The power that levies a tax by that act affirms a certain sovereignty over the subject which it taxes. But the Church is not wholly subject to the sovereignty of the state. It is a spiritual independence, and it will be reluctant to acknowledge any claim which might end in its entire subordination to the civil power. The admission of the sovereignty of the state over all ecclesiastical property to the extent of enforcing a tax upon it, might prove a dangerous concession to the state; it might bring the Church into such an outward subjection to the state as would prove to be a serious impairment of its rightful position. The Church might pay its share for civil protection, but it must maintain as much outward freedom from the state as may be necessary to guarantee its spiritual existence and authority. There must be somewhere in the spiritual independence of the Church a limit to the power of the state over its property and external administration. Its communion service should not be submitted to the hand of the tax-gatherer. While obviously, on the one hand, all power of the state to limit or bring under the control of the laws of the land the property of the Church cannot be denied, for it is property, and as such, falls under the oversight of the state; on the other hand, there is evident justice in the claim that the exercise of civil jurisdiction over the property of the Church cannot be pushed too far, and must be held under some restrictions, because while it is property subject to the law, it is also the property of a body which claims a certain independent sovereignty for itself above the civil authority. And whenever it is felt that the exercise of the ordinary powers of the state might bring into question this free sovereignty of the Church in its own sphere, the exercise of that authority will be resisted by those who believe in the spiritual independence of the Church from the state. The autonomy of the Church is to be preserved.

This question as to the right of the state to tax church property, or, if we admit the right in general, the question concerning the limits of the exercise of it which are required by the necessary autonomy of the Church, indicates that the present relation between these bodies, even when each has been made most independent of the other, is not a permanent adjustment of things, and that a free church in a free state cannot be regarded as an ideal and hence ultimate solution of this conflict of civil and religious forces in modern history.

An evolution of church and state through these three chief forms may be traced in the history of the New Haven Colony, the process taking place within the short period of less than two centuries. The settlers of the colony established practically in the wilderness a church-state. The Mosaic law was made temporarily the civil law, and holding civil office was conditioned on church-membership. Subsequently, the New Haven Colony came under the charter of Connecticut, and the General Court assumed in many ways oversight of ecclesiastical affairs. The Church was maintained by taxation. The legislative body was more than once called to advise in ecclesiastical controversies; the legislature, for instance, prescribed how a second ecclesiastical body should be set off from the original society of the First Church in New Haven, and determined not only the allotment of property, but also, after allowing a certain time for personal choice, the division of the population between the two congregations. Such legislative interference and control tended towards, if in some respects it did not practically amount to, a state-church. The act of toleration, however, looked in another direction, and later, the existing separation of ecclesiastical and legislative functions was effected; under the present constitution of the state there is no interference of the civil with the religious body in anything pertaining properly to the sphere of the latter.

We may look upon some confessedly imperfect, working-theory of the relation of Church and State as the best possible provision under existing social conditions. Adopting in this matter Herbert Spencer's frequent distinction between "absolute ethics" and "relative ethics," we may be content to support that co-ordination of the civil and ecclesiastical powers in any country which seems to be most in accordance with the spirit of its institutions and in the line of its truest historical development. We shall thereby reach that which is relatively good under present conditions, although we fail of that which is ideally best.

The question, however, still remains, what is the ideal relation of Church and State?

(3) A transcendental unity of these powers is conceivable.

The limit of the possible in the development of the life of humanity is only set by something inconceivable. We cannot say that a conceivable goal is impossible. A transcendental and final oneness of the spheres and functions of social life which now are so distinct and independent as the civil and religious, is not inconceivable, and therefore

not beyond the range of the human possibilities; for all that is necessary in order to suppose it accomplished is to imagine the complete spiritualization and Christianization of both powers, — that is, of the life of humanity in its entirety. The ultimate unity would be reached when all law should have become an inward law, and the inward religious spirit should also have given form and color to all outward spheres of existence, so that both civil government and ecclesiastical authority, as external forms of the one perfect life, would alike become unnecessary, and might pass away. This final unity would be the result of that inward unifying and perfecting of society which would render all outward law and order superfluous.

We can already see some beginning of this process towards higher unity in the lives of individuals. Grace becomes the law of conduct, and needs no longer the outward commandments of religion. In the spiritual lawfulness of their natures Christian men begin to live in the same freedom both in Church and State. Outward forms and order are the means freely chosen and spontaneously obeyed by them for the expression of human fellowship and worship; yet in proportion as the inward work of the Spirit is complete they cease to need the external authorities either of civil or religious obligation. Conceive this inward liberty and law of the Spirit to become not only the virtue of a few, but the wisdom also of the many; conceive society as one whole to be thus thoroughly spiritualized; and then both the outward order of the State and the forms of the Church might also be conceived to coalesce and indeed to fall away, as the husks fall from the ripened grain at the harvest time. The one perfected life would find natural and spontaneous expression both in the active fellowships of pure spirits with one another, and in the communion and worship of all the saints in the presence of the one true God.

As the conclusion of this discussion of the relations of Church and State the following should accordingly be written down: (1) The Church and the State are the present necessary forms for the realization of the Christian

Ideal, and each represents a part of the complete good which is to be realized. They are not therefore to be regarded as mere means to something beyond themselves, but rather as representing, each in its sphere, something which belongs to the essential idea of the perfect human good, and which therefore is an end in itself. (2) But that perfect human good is to be realized in some final and complete unity and harmony of all its elements; these two powers are now, however, not perfectly harmonized under any historic forms. (3) Hence, while representing essential elements in the idea of the highest human perfection, they are signs also of a still unfinished development, and an incompleted working out of the Christian Ideal. (4) Through these two related and as yet not perfectly harmonized forms of social organization the Ideal moves on towards some further and transcendental unity; meanwhile the best practical working harmony between the two is to be observed. (5) That final unity may be conceived as possible through the spiritualization of all the spheres of life until these temporal outward forms for the working of the Spirit shall no longer be needed, and may pass in fulfilment away. Through the Church and the State as two mutually complementary forms, preserving each other, and, in the spirit of the laws and in the comprehension of the body of Christ, becoming more assimilated to each other, the progressive realization of the Christian Ideal is to be brought to pass, until the present world-age shall come to the end of its time and the completion of its historic task, and the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, shall appear.

The Christian prophet saw no temple in heaven; — the Church with its localized centre of worship will not be needed there. "And the nations shall walk amidst the light thereof; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it"; — all human government has fulfilled its course, and brought its good through the gates into the heavenly city. There remains but one throne, and there is one Presence, before whom all worship — one Light in which all dwell, — "even the throne of God and the

Lamb"; and "the glory of God did lighten it."[1] Thus both these earthly forms of the kingdom, the Church and the State, shall be needed no more and shall pass away, when the Messianic reign shall come, and Christ's kingdom be delivered up to the Father that God may be all in all.

§ 4. THE INDETERMINATE SOCIAL SPHERES FOR THE REALIZATION OF THE CHRISTIAN IDEAL

Men may form for themselves social spheres more or less definite and stable along lines of individual choice and association, or of similar industrial pursuits, or of still larger public interests. Our friendships gather a social community around our homes; business becomes the organizing power of still other social groups; every principle of association for common interests segregates men into communities, and the lines of such classification may cross even the well-marked boundaries of religious separation or of national division. It is a sign of the progress of the spiritual life of man that the circles of these common human interests have been so multiplied and enlarged. The sphere of the individual's interest in Aristotle's day was practically confined to the city in which he dwelt; the city was his community, and it comprised within its single organic cell all the social interests of men. But now the community which surrounds the family-unit is not limited to a single village, or tribe, or comprised even within the bounds of any nationality; the lines of one's social interest are not stopped at the walls of cities, and may reach to the ends of the earth. Friendship in the modern world may become a magnetic bond between opposite hemispheres; and the highways of commerce, as well as the enterprise of missionary love, are making men fellow-citizens of one world.

The community, which each man forms around himself, may be defined as that part of the social tissue which, whether near or remote, is bound up, and exists in some sympathetic touch, with the nerve-centre of force

[1] Rev. xxii. 3; xxi. 23.

that is represented by his individual will.[1] The community in this sense may be large for one man, and small for another; limited by the narrowness of one man's interest in life, and grandly expanded by another's love of humanity. The community is the social surrounding which is left open to private choice and free association. It is the larger sphere of the individual's personal life. Its diameter may be measured by the reach of his will, and its circumference by his interest in humanity.

[1] Writers in sociology have of late been inclined to classify as distinct social spheres those forms of association or co-operation which have acquired a certain fixity and distinctiveness of industrial character, such as the workshop, or any definite and permanent combination of men in similar pursuits. (Thus Höffding uses the phrase, "Die freier Kulturgesellshaft"; *Ethik*, s. 251.) We need not go further at this point into this subdivision, as we shall recur to these forms of social life subsequently; it is necessary, however, in classifying the spheres of life to leave room for these lesser and variable forms.

PART SECOND. CHRISTIAN DUTIES

CHAPTER I

THE CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE

We are not speaking of a moral theory, but of a familiar moral fact, when we speak of the Christian conscience. It is a typical form of man's moral consciousness. It is not an indeterminate and nebulous moral consciousness; the Christian conscience is as positive and distinct a fact in man's moral history as is the morning star in the sky. It is to be observed and studied, therefore, as a known and luminous moral power, although of a spiritual order.

I. THE SPECIFIC CHARACTER OF THE CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE

1. The Christian conscience receives certain definite characteristics through its formative principle of faith. By faith in Christ the moral consciousness is brought under the power of a personal Example; the conscience becomes Christian as it is mastered by Christ.[1] The Christian conscience is conscience no more bound under an impersonal law, but greeting the promise of its living Ideal. It is conscience following its Christ into the felt presence of God.

The influence of faith by which conscience becomes Christian, will produce two marked effects in the moral consciousness: it will greatly intensify the sense of personal responsibility, and it will also light up conscientiousness with a sense of freedom. The touch of the Spirit of Christ awakens conscience to a sense of the whole obliga-

[1] 2 Cor. x. 5.

tion of a human life before unrealized. The effect of conversion on the natural conscience is to raise it to a higher power.

This result holds true if we compare the same individual conscience with itself before and after a clear Christian decision of life has been made. It may not seem to be true if we compare men of naturally fine moral discernment who are not professedly Christians, with men of naturally low moral development who have become Christians. It is also true that the moral growth of Christian men may be retarded and kept down when overlaid with crusts of creedal or ecclesiastical forms. The development of the Christian life on the ethical side may be checked by an undue intellectual, or even emotional development of the religious nature; or the moral growth may not have kept up with the religious, and consequently we may observe occasionally side by side in the same man, or in the same Christian community for a time, a comparatively low standard of Christian honor together with a high idea of the claims of religious truth and the exercise of pious affections. But these arrested or one-sided developments of Christianity always tend to correct themselves in due season. The distinctive fact to be observed is the effect of religion on the same conscience as compared with what was, or might be, the moral condition without such religious motive. Individual cases often present a simple moral problem in the rule of three: if a man with his religious training and beliefs possesses only so much moral character, how much less would he have without any power of Christianity in his conscience? In so far as the conscience feels and responds to the influence of Christ, it is clarified in its moral judgments and rendered more efficient in its moral action.

The other characteristic mentioned, which faith imparts to the Christian conscience, is freedom. It is distinctive of the Christian life, that while it grows more conscientious, it also grows less and less a task of duty and more and more a service of delight. The Christian faith renders life throughout a fulfilment of a trust. By faith the law of love is transformed into the love of law. And almost in proportion as the law is loved, it ceases to be felt as law. Hence Christian conscientiousness ceases to be a hard, punctilious moral accounting, and becomes an eager and glad fulfilment of the commandments. The love of God masters the Christian man, and the mastery of Love is found to be perfect liberty. The man who looks into the perfect law of liberty is blessed in his doing.[1] Fear is cast out by perfect love.[2]

[1] James i. 25.

[2] 1 John iv. 18.

2. The Christian conscience receives distinctive character from its informing principle of love. Its enhanced power and gracious freedom, which are the effects of faith in the moral consciousness, are further heightened and irradiated by the love which is the indwelling and abiding motive of the Christian obligation of life. But besides these effects, other happy results appear when the love of Christ is made the constraining law of the Christian conscience.[1] Love in the conscience becomes light in which duty is to be more clearly discovered. "And this I pray," said an apostle, "that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment."[2] Love is itself a power of knowing, and science without love fails of insight into the heart of nature. Love is likewise a principle of moral discernment; love abounds in good judgment. There is no clearer light for the determination of what is duty than this; let your love abound in your practical judgments. The largest, surest common sense is that in which love abounds. Selfishness never shows the best judgment. On the whole, and in the larger issues of things, love always proves to have been the happier discernment. We may be distrustful of any position which we hold, and any course we are pursuing, if we find that our love does not grow in it. The unfailing light of the divine wisdom is love. Infinite love can make no mistakes. And the surest ways are the ways wherein there is the most love: the clearest parts of our conduct, amid these perplexities of things, are the Christlike parts of our lives.

As the light of love in the Christian conscience renders it a peculiarly bright and discerning conscience, so likewise it keeps it in the truth, and renders it especially a truth-seeking conscience. This truthfulness of it follows directly from its informing principle; for love must seek to go to the heart of nature, and can rest satisfied only in the embrace of eternal reality. In proportion to its purity and its power love will free its eyes from all deceptions, and consume as a holy flame the spuriousness and pride of

[1] 2 Cor. v. 14. [2] Phil. i. 9.

life. Perfect love can abide only in perfect truth. Consequently the conscience which is informed and inspired with Christian love, will be a constant ardor of soul for the truth. Nothing untrue can be lovable to the eye of the Christian conscience. In this devotion to the truth faith works with love in the Christian moral consciousness; for faith is the receptive attitude of a man's whole rational and moral nature towards the truth. Faith is intellectual openness towards the truth, and moral determination to trust in the truth, — come from what source or with what message it will. Faith is the simple, yet profoundest effort and aim of our human nature in its integrity to keep in vital touch with, and to wait for knowledge of, the final and absolute truth of the universe. Hence the Christian conscience, by virtue of its formative principle of faith, as well as by virtue of its indwelling law of love, will be a conscience in the truth and of the truth, an intensely truthful conscience.

3. Still another characteristic of a genuinely Christian conscience, which proceeds from those just mentioned, remains to be noticed: it is a conscience which lives and works in hope. It moves off along all the ways of human effort in the expectation of the Christ. The Christian conscience might be described as distinctively a Messianic conscience. It condemns the evil and follows after the good in the full assurance that good is to overcome the evil. It becomes consequently a happy and healthful conscience in all its contacts with sin and suffering. Hopefulness is the moral wholesomeness of the Christian conscience in the world. There is always something unhealthful in a conscience which has lost hope. The Christian conscience by reason of its faith and love can never grow cynical, or pessimistic, or be unsympathetic in its judgments of human life. It is a helpful, because always a hopeful, moral presence among men.

We have already pointed out[1] the tendency of morality without religious faith to become pessimistic; although biological ethics recognizes the fact that, so far as we can

[1] p. 80.

see, the great laws of life work towards beneficent results. Yet hope requires for its full assurance some faith in a larger cosmical order than is seen, and its spiritual completions of life. Having this hope, the Christian conscience is characterized by ultimate optimism in its judgments. The New Testament, which is the outward rule of the Christian conscience, is from beginning to end, in its prophetic outlook, the most hopeful book in all the literature of the world. Its gospel begins with a heavenly song of peace and good will, and it ends with the new song of the redeemed. Beyond all passing clouds of evil Christian faith sees the eternal sunshine.

This hopefulness of the conscience that is made conformable to Christ, will affect the very quality and spirit of it; the daily conversation and habitual judgments of human affairs and of the vast, unfinished problems of providence will be lighted up and clarified by the Christian hope. The conscientiousness of the Christian believer will not be overcast and full of gloom; hopefulness will be the prevailing sunniness of the Christian consciousness of life and death.

II. THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OF CONSCIENCE

1. The life of conscience is from the Father of spirits; but the development of the Christian conscience is, in the first instance, the result of the Christian training of the household, and subsequently of the whole moral discipline of life. The education of conscience is the office of Christian pedagogics, which begins with the baptism of the child and its first awakening into the atmosphere of a Christian home, and which includes the prayers learned from the Christian parents' lips, the nurture of Christian love, the methodical training in knowledge of the Scriptures which is, or should be, given to all its children by the Church, as well as the whole subsequent education of maturer years in Christian truth, and exercise in the application of Christian principles to the problems of life. Indeed all our earthly life from the cradle to the grave

may be regarded as one progressive school for the education of the Christian conscience. Not only was the law a schoolmaster to lead to Christ, but the gospel itself, in its ethical power, is a schoolmaster to lead to the final fitness of souls for fellowship with the ascended Christ in his ultimate kingdom of love.

While the Christian conscience is no more a servant, but a son, and, as Ignatius observed long ago, "it is absurd to profess Christ Jesus, and to Judaize,"[1] still there is a sense in which we still must find Christianity to be a school of life; the Puritans discovered frequent reasons in the weaknesses of human nature for holding up "gospel rules and patterns." Ascetic restraints or self-disciplinary vows may have a certain relative necessity, as an athletic training, in the strengthening of Christian manhood; they become vicious, however, when valued as ends in themselves, and are to be condemned whenever they do not help men learn the great Christian lesson of living with a good conscience in the freedom of the gospel. For as Ignatius said of Judaism, — "Christianity did not believe into Judaism, but Judaism into Christianity,"[2] — so we should say that Christianity does not fall into asceticism, but whatever disciplinary processes conscience may still find necessary, are to lead into Christianity, which is the law of liberty. Some outward schooling of conscience through rules, resolutions, vows of abstinence, may be necessary so long as sin remains in the world, and temptations suddenly may assail; but such necessity of discipline is a sign of our present immaturity, and should be humbly accepted as a preparatory training of character, and never vaunted as meritorious; ideally, and in its finished education, the Christian conscience dispenses with all rules as its Lord's perfect art of living is mastered, and love lacks no discernment and will never fail.

2. The relation between the individual and the social training and development of the Christian conscience needs to be more closely considered.

[1] *Ad Magn.* x. [2] *Ibid.* x.

Recent ethical writers have justly urged that, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as an individual conscience; that all conscience is necessarily social; that no conscience can be formed except in a social matrix; and that every conscience carries the marks of the mould in which it has been formed, and shows in its constitution the typical signs of its human birth and inheritance. This is only the ethical part, however, of the general truth of the solidarity of humanity. Every man is an individual of a race, and the destiny of each man, in whatsoever age he is born, is bound up in the entire history of mankind, and waits for its determination in the consummation of the whole. Of each human life it may be said, as it was said of an inspired word of God, "No prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation." Every life is a prophecy which belongs to the whole course of redemption, and its special scripture must be interpreted and judged in its relation to all that has gone before and to all that is to follow after it. Hence the Christian individual in his moral judgments and growth can never be absolutely independent of the Christian social whole — the Church of the living God. The individual Christian conscience is formed in the communion of the saints. Ethically, as well as spiritually, will the saying of the apostle justify itself, that we may be "strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge."[1] While the Christian conscience is absolutely dependent on Christ, and He only is its supreme law, it is relatively dependent on the Church, and will be influenced by, as well as act directly upon, the moral consciousness which prevails in the general Christianity of an age.

3. The conscience of the Church, therefore, which is the resultant of the general moral education of the Christian world and which shapes and moulds the individual conscience in any age, is a factor in man's moral history second to no other power and of far-reaching consequences. This general conscience of the Church holds a certain

[1] Eph. iii. 18, 19.

externality, and presents even a nomistic form, to the individual Christian conscience. It is to be considered as the continuation of the outward law of the Spirit of Christ, or as the embodiment in successive forms of the moral life of the Spirit; as the Church is itself in some real sense the body of Christ and the continuation of his life in the world.

This is the truth which underlies the Roman Catholic doctrine of the confessional. It is properly held that the individual conscience should rectify itself by the conscience of the Church. In its collective conscience it receives the confession of the individual conscience, corrects it, justifies it, or shows it the right rules to which it should conform. And in this underlying idea of the general collective conscience of the Catholic Church as a corrective and law for the individual, there is a deep Christian truth,—the truth that no man lives to himself, that no man even in his best life can be wholly independent of his fellows; that there is a human conscience answering to the Divine righteousness, a human conscience to be Christianized and made objectively present and powerful in the Church, which is the body of Christ.

This truth of the collective Christian conscience—which becomes localized and powerful in the moral consciousness of the Church, from which it proceeds to judge and to rectify human life in all relations and directions—is a truth of the moral oneness of the Christian body with its Lord, which should not be left to Rome alone, but which belongs to all communions of believers; and this truth receives practical formularization in the common traditions, customs, and Christian standards which are to be found among all bodies of believers. Rome adds priestly pretension to the natural working of the common Christian conscience, and perverts it by making the priestly class the authoritative custodians and administrators of the collective moral consciousness of Christians. The fallacy of the confessional lies not in the truth that the individual believer has an account to render to the general communion of believers, but in the error that the priesthood has been

made the supreme representative and visible organ of the general moral consciousness of the body of Christ.

The duty of confession of sins is not owed to any vicegerent of the public conscience of believers: it is a duty owed first from individuals to individuals in view of the general moral law and order of the Christian community, in those cases where individuals, in their relation to one another, have offended that law of the whole body; and if an offence which may have been committed involves the whole Christian body, it may become also a duty of public confession to the Church, which has been wronged, and not a duty to be absolved through any private penitence.

A proper recognition of this moral fact that there is a collective conscience to be regarded by the individual conscience will serve to check some evils which result from excessive moral individualism. A merely subjective conscience — a conscience which wilfully and arbitrarily breaks loose from the collective moral consciousness — is a force of good let loose, and running wild, and liable to fall into some sudden moral catastrophe. Exaggerated moral individualism is always in danger of a fall. Fanaticism, and extreme sectarianism of all kinds, illustrate the moral evil which is apt to follow the loss of a deep sense of unity with the ethical consciousness of the whole communion of believers; the penalties of such isolation are often paid in unsymmetrical and unlovable moral developments; and sometimes even in the loss of essential elements of moral life. The fruitful tree, although a single and self-contained growth, will strike its roots down deep and spread them wide in the common soil. There is no other law of moral fruitfulness in human life.

4. In recognizing this inter-dependence and these vital inter-relations of the individual and the social Christian conscience, we are not denying the true independence of the individual soul in its single responsibility to its own Master and Lord. Rather from this general Christian consciousness the individual conscience grows to its own firmness and completeness. It takes the common moral elements up into its personal growth,

transforms them into its own vitality, and returns them in its mature and perfect fruits. Moreover, the individual conscience works in turn down upon the public Christian conscience from which it springs. Through the individual conscience in its personal quickening the public conscience is to be stirred. By the light which falls upon the highest souls the level plains are to be illumined. Because the Christian Ideal is far from realized as yet in the Christian world, there is, and must always be until the kingdom of Christ fully comes, room and need for the superior consciences of the few who have climbed into purer light, seen broader horizons, come nearer the eternal source of truth. The leadership of the public conscience has ever been given to the chosen prophets to whom the word of the Lord came with power; but only the *leadership* of the conscience of the Christian humanity of which they are members, not right of separation at will from it, or absolute independence of it, or superiority or indifference to it. In order to lead one must become not less but more human; to lead the Christian conscience of a world which is to be made Christian, one must have not less, but more in his own soul of those vitalizing truths which are the manifestation of the Spirit in the whole Christian world. The light which I see gathered on some lofty object on the horizon, and which may be flashed back with dazzling brilliance from some single point, is the light with which that object becomes illumined, not by taking itself out of the common sunshine, but by catching up the diffused radiance, bringing many rays to a clear focus through its interposition, or reflecting brightly from its surface what else would have seemed but darkly scattered light. The pure individual conscience, which is set for a beacon and a sign, is the universal moral consciousness of an age concentrated and brought to a burning focus in some single reformer's soul.

These quick individual consciences may be regarded as the special points of sensitiveness to the moral in the general public consciousness. They have a peculiar power to feel the truth. They are the points of keen moral responsive-

ness in the life of the Christian community. And moral progress requires the existence in a community, and for an age, of such morally sensitive individuality. Every town and village needs intelligent men and women who shall be for the community a kind of conscience within the public conscience; who are quick to discover and bold to proclaim any moral danger, and who will feel most deeply any public shame; who will keep themselves in the best light of their age, and reflect it on others who may not have reached their levels of moral attainment.

So the social Christian conscience and the individually illumined conscience belong together, work each upon the other, and together constitute the moral order on earth, through which the ideal is to be reached and the kingdom of heaven to be brought near.

III. MEANS FOR THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OF CONSCIENCE

These means will be both of a public and private nature corresponding to this twofold relation of every conscience, — its social dependence, and its personal character.

The public means for this purpose may be summarized as those customs, laws, institutions, and organs of expression of the general sentiment of a community, which represent the public conscience, and which, besides other purposes for which they exist, may serve to form the habits of the members of the community in the mould of the accepted social morality.

1. One of these public means for the education of conscience is the public school. But the question immediately arises, how much may the public school contribute to the moral or Christian education of the children of the people?

There will be little occasion for dispute when this teaching extends only so far as is plainly necessary in order to fit youth to discharge the offices of good citizens, and when the moral teaching of the school does not go beyond the general moral sentiment of the community.

The average public virtue outside the school may set the standard beneath which the instruction in the school should not fall. The gauge of moral teaching within the school-room of the state must at least stand as high as the level of moral principles at which the public conscience stands without the school-room. And the work of bringing the children of the state up at least to this level of moral knowledge and practice, may justly be required of any system of public education. Evidently then on this principle, as public morals without the school rise, the moral teaching required within the school may be increased. As the public sense of the virtue, for instance, of temperance, of the desirableness of industrial co-operation, or of the sacredness and happiness of the family, rises and becomes strong, the public school may be urged to give increased time to these subjects, and more efficient instruction, that it may graduate children into men and women who shall be thoroughly trained up to these moral standards of the community.

But can more than this be fairly asked of the moral instruction which is to be given in the public school? Can the state expect, or reasonably require, its schools to exceed the ideas of righteousness in which the people generally believe? To answer the question in the negative would seem to take all hope of moral leadership of the people from the public school, and to make it powerless as a factor for further progress towards moral ideals among the people. The school might still retain moral influence and utility in preventing a community from slipping backwards, but that would be all of its permissible moral service to the state. Yet education seems to contain an ideal element in its very intention, and to fail of its full scope and possibility if the ideal be wholly ignored in its methods and aims. Should public education be divested entirely of this idealizing element, and become only an endeavor to keep what has already been obtained in the morals of the people, it would obviously lose an inspiration which is necessary to the very life of educational effort. We must admit, therefore, if for no other reason

than its own vital necessity as educative power, that the public school may be expected in some measure to transcend the actual standard and attainment of morals in the community around it, and should seek to lead the children of the people to further and better moral accomplishment. To hold either teachers or scholars too closely down to the average of moral opinions, might prove fatal to the life of the public school. No educational work can be successfully carried on except in some felt presence of the ideal. The only question, therefore, to be considered, relates to the degree in which education in public schools may be carried beyond the generally recognized ideas and standards of life in the community which supports the schools.

Little practical difficulty will be experienced so long as only higher ideas of generally admitted virtues are held up in the public schools, or larger measures of common duties are insisted upon. In a community which believes in honesty, temperance, and friendliness, teaching more honesty in all relations of life, or more careful temperance, or more helpful friendliness, will provoke no comment, and cause no trouble. The state by such teaching only reacts morally upon the people by means of their own virtues.

But if moral teaching in the public school should advance so far beyond the received beliefs of the community as to teach new modes of virtue; as, for example, if there should be inculcated some socialistic conceptions of human relations and duties, which may possibly be men's coming virtues, but which are not yet grasped by the common moral sense of the people; or if the public school should teach as morals certain ideas of right and truth, which may be the ethical conceptions of a portion only of the community; as, for example, certain religious conceptions of moral obligation; — then the question would very likely be raised: Has the public school kept within its proper limits? Has it not gone so far beyond the community as to forfeit its own claim on the community as a public school?

Theoretically there is no moral or religious instruction which may not fall within the province of the public school, provided only the community which maintains it be ready for it. But practically the public school is so closely related to the people that it cannot be expected, nor should it be required, greatly to exceed the needs of education which the people may be otherwise led to desire. And its moral and religious teaching cannot justly (that is, in due recognition of all the interests which are to be combined in it) be carried to such an extent as to cause serious division in the community over its teachings. The rights of all to the public school set necessary limits to its extension. Its moral and especially its religious teachings must consequently be kept on the lines, and held well within the limits, which are to be determined by the general harmonies of individual consciences and of religious beliefs. In some communities it may be permitted without offence to go farther in these directions than in others; in them all the extension of its teaching should be limited by a just regard for the general moral and religious consciousness of the people whom the school represents and for whose benefit it exists. More than this, either in morals or in religion, if desirable, must be supplied by the voluntary efforts of those classes who see the need and hence believe in making efforts to supply it. Usually the duties may be taught, even though the sanctions of duty may be left to the different religious beliefs of the people.

2. Another public means of moral education is the pulpit. The power of the living voice in the pulpit is not to be superseded by any form of literature. Although Sunday newspapers furnish their allspice of wordly seasoning for the Sabbath day; although books multiply, and the means of liberal education are happily brought, in many branches of them, within reach of the hands of the people, so that the lecturer has well-nigh disappeared from the popular platform, and even the political orator is becoming an echo and tradition of the past; nevertheless, so long as the Church continues to confess its belief

in the Holy Ghost, and the Spirit works as a living influence through personal contacts from soul to soul afire with truth, we may be assured that the spoken word of the Lord will not lack audience, and the Christian pulpit, if it does not lose its touch of vital faith upon the living Christ, will never fail of its prophetic place and power in the world.

The social function of the pulpit has always been largely ethical; the preacher is the teacher of righteousness. The prophets of old were religious statesmen and moral leaders of the people. And the great doctrinal epistles branch directly into fruitful precepts for conduct. A large portion of the apostolic teaching is ethical. It is peculiarly the office of the Christian pulpit to apply Christian truths to the conduct of life. This ethical function of the Christian ministry is not destined to grow less, as the social problems of modern life increase in complexity. The preacher must fix his eye on personal character; and the pulpit should be charged also with the message of social righteousness and peace. It may be said that the modern pulpit is characterized by an increasing ethical earnestness. Social ethics especially attract as never before the attention of the followers of the Son of man. There is much unused sociological material for the pulpit to draw from in the prophetic literature of Israel; and the Sermon on the Mount is the rich mine of teaching for the new social ethics which the world needs. But it should be remembered that light as well as heat is needed in Christian sociology, and the Christian social prophet needs now to be a particularly intelligent prophet. While the pulpit may be sometimes compelled in its prophetic office to become a means of flaming ethical agitation, the Christian ministry are also required by fidelity to the "kingdom and the patience which are in Jesus"[1] to have calm, open eyes for whatever is good and true in existing institutions, and to be quick to recognize whatever in modern life is really gathering with the Christ. While the preacher of the gospel of the kingdom may often be called to speak brave words against

[1] Rev. 1. 9.

social evils, and to rebuke grasping greed even within the Church, and to bring all moral forces at his command to bear at the points of wrong and waste in the lives of his fellow-men it is likewise true that in the interest of the ethics of reform the pulpit may sometimes be called to resist the bigotry of reform.[1] Broad ethical training and sober sociological study are becoming indispensable requisites in the education of a Christian ministry for the pulpit and the work of the Church in modern society. With such training, and by means of the moral sagacity, which should be sought as a gift of the Spirit, for the application of the gospel to life, the pulpit may become an increasing power in the community.

3. Another public means for the attainment of the Christian good is the Christian College.

Education, in any Christian idea of it, is for service. The college exists not merely for the sake of culture, but for the good of the people. It should represent whatever is high and worthiest in the striving of a nation. It is called to moral leadership. It should not lose its power by institutional cowardice. It does not fulfil its mission simply in fitting a number of men to earn their livelihood by their brains. It should give light for the life of the people. The Christian idea of education saves it from Pharisaism, and consecrates it to humanity.

In New England the earlier colleges were founded and built up not for the sake of learning merely, but patriotically and religiously for the country and for the Church. University settlements and university extension in the coming years may serve to prevent learning from degenerating into professionalism, or becoming a cloistered virtue without wholesome part in the life of the people.

4. The modern newspaper is another means by which the public conscience may be educated, or by which it may also be debased and misled. The press is becoming the daily judgment of society. A glaring light of publicity is shed by it over all things human. On the whole the effect of this light of publicity is good. Things evil love the

[1] It needs to be added that preachers as social prophets should be sure of their facts before being bold in denunciation.

darkness. But the press seems also at times to be a social impertinence; some newspapers become like the plague of the frogs in Egypt, overrunning all the houses and entering into every chamber. Yet the daily press offers a broad and honorable field for Christian talent. Conscience in journalism may become a mighty power. Through the incessant influence of an intelligent and honorable journalism, all good causes may be helped rapidly forward on their way of conquest.[1]

The religious newspaper is a modern instrumentality for helping forward, or for hindering, the coming of the kingdom of God. But although its aims and ideals are professedly religious, from want of intelligence or from lack of love its influence may become obstructive and divisive. Readers of the Life of Frederick Denison Maurice will recall with what decision and courage in his earlier life he laid down the wager of battle against the religious papers of England, because he regarded them all as representative of sects and parties, and hence in the way of the progress of the true kingdom of God.[2] Denominational papers, it must be admitted, have often been narrow, divisive, and obstructive, and their methods of sectarian conflict have by no means been held above reproach. They have usually represented the traditional rather than the advancing religious thought of their day. This has been their natural tendency because denominationalism thrives from its own separativeness, and the denominational organ will naturally embody the distinctive spirit of the sect which maintains it. Had there been religious papers in Jerusalem at the time of our Lord's ministry, those papers would naturally have been edited by the scribes, and would doubtless have reflected the prevailing opinions of the Jewish schools.

Yet despite those tendencies of religious journalism which led Mr. Maurice to reject all the organs of the schools and the sects, and notwithstanding the unfortunate tone and limited knowledge which have made the name of relig-

[1] The question has been raised whether it might not be advantageous to endow newspapers as independent organs of moral opinion.

[2] *Life and Letters*, vol. i. p. 241 sq.; ii. p. 343.

ious papers often a byword among persons of large and luminous intelligence, nevertheless, religious journalism has been instrumental in furthering important movements, in keeping the missionary interests of the Church before the people, and in affording also a popular arena for the discussion of practical as well as theological questions. Occasionally a religious paper has succeeded in keeping itself up to a higher level of Christian comprehension, and breathing a sweeter spirit through its editorial columns, and then its influence has been broadly enlightening and ennobling; on the whole, the religious press must be accepted as a quite indispensable modern means for the maintenance and further working out of Christian good among the people, — and the remainder of its wrath Providence will restrain!

5. All these means of training the Christian conscience, and realizing Christian ideals of society, would prove fruitless were it not for the constant and multiplied influences of personal Christian life and example. Christ founded his kingdom in men. He concerned himself not in establishing institutions, but in making men of his Spirit. The apostles were first chosen and trained, and then they were left to form the Christian Church. Jesus did the foundation work for all Christian institutions in his training of the twelve. He would have inverted the order of divine grace had he sought to build his Church first, and to have fitted Peter afterwards to be his apostle.

The original method of Jesus in making men Christian, and through Christian men forming and securing Christian institutions, can never be wholly abandoned. No institutionalism can redeem society. Charitable organizations cannot drain the source of evil. State control cannot grasp the forces of righteousness. Society can never be saved by bureaucracy, — whether it be the bureaucracy of ecclesiasticism, or of some socialistic pattern. The healing touch of personal influence is always needed among men.

The particular means for the personal education of the Christian conscience we pass by for the present as they may be more conveniently considered in connection with our duties towards ourselves.

Before we proceed to the discussion of particular duties, several general questions with regard to conscience remain to be considered.

IV. CERTAIN QUESTIONS CONCERNING CONSCIENCE

Some of these are of preliminary importance as our views with regard to them will affect our further judgments concerning specific duties.

1. One of these inquiries relates to what Rothe has happily distinguished as "the individual moral instance."[1] The law is general; duties are specific. The commandment is exceeding broad; obligations are sometimes very personal. The law is to be applied at individual points, and in personal instances of it. Some ethical writers have pointed out what they call "the fallacy of the particular case." How far then, if at all, may the moral imperative be modified or mollified by the requirements of individual life, in the circumstances of the particular case?

Moralists have agreed that many things may be regarded as morally allowable, and that under the general principles of morality some space must be left for the play of individual preferences. Yet much of the practical wisdom of life, which is gained often through no little perplexity, consists in knowing in many instances just where the morally necessary may end, and where the morally permissible begins.

We are accustomed to say that such and such things are morally indifferent. If we mean by the morally indifferent simply those actions or choices which are left indeterminate by any general maxims of morals, it must be admitted that a great variety of possible actions falls within the category of things innocent in themselves, or morally indifferent. But this is only saying that general rules cannot cover all possible cases; that no moral maxims can include all conceivable instances which may present themselves for individual determination. But if

[1] *Theol. Ethik*, § 805.

we mean by this common phrase, the morally indifferent, that any action of the will, in any sphere, can be without moral character and is itself an act of moral indifference, — that is quite another matter. For, strictly speaking, no choice of a moral agent can be morally colorless. Each volition, irrespective of its object, is the act of a moral being, and as such is bound up with all his other choices as a part of the moral habit of the man. No personal act, if it be considered in all its relations, can be deemed to be absolutely morally neutral. Only unconscious cerebration, or automatic movements, like respiration, may be so regarded; but whatever enters the field of human consciousness, is thereby in the field of moral consciousness, and proceeds among moral relations according to the whole moral movement of the life. What may thus be left morally indeterminate under general law is no longer indifferent, but takes on ethical character in the individual relations and under the light of the personal consciousness in which it is performed. Strictly speaking, nothing is morally allowable merely, and not obligatory, which may become my personal act or exist for a moment as a part of my personal history. It is only because we may not be able to determine the moral relations of many acts, or to discern their subtle and intimate relations to character, that we are ever conscious of them as indifferent or speak of them as things dependent on our momentary pleasure. Our amusements and recreations, the laughter and the song of life, as well as our appointed tasks and serious responsibilities, may with increasing moral wisdom fall into their true place and become happy duties, all together, in the moral harmony of our whole manhood. Moral law must leave much, it is true, to the individual instance; but the personal instance itself falls under the law, and the right exercise of personal preference becomes a part of the moral training of the man.

For example, there may be nothing in the nature of moral law in general to determine whether I shall take a walk in one direction or another; whether I walk up or down the street is equally allowable, so long as I respect the rights of others to the sidewalk; but whether I choose

rightly or wrongly in walking in either direction will depend upon my individual errand; and if I have no errand except to take the exercise of a walk, then the direction and the length of my walk, and all the choices connected with that exercise will be morally allowable, yet not indifferent, so far as with intelligent judgment I may order my steps in accordance with the purpose which gives law to that action, and seek to bring the details of my movements into the closest accord with my right moral aim in such exercise.

We do many things accidentally, or with moral indifference, simply because we have not a sufficiently fine moral judgment to discriminate between them, not because they are in themselves absolutely indifferent, or without any moral relations to life. We have only to suppose our moral knowledge indefinitely increased in order to imagine the morally accidental as disappearing entirely from our conduct of life. And indeed it is a sign not only of deepening moral purpose, but likewise of broadening moral wisdom, if we find that the range of the morally accidental in our conduct grows less and less, while more of the daily little things of life are seen to be part and portion of our clear duty; if the morally allowable blends more and more with our duties in one fine moral sense of life. We shall thus gain a healthful conscientiousness in all things.

2. Another matter of conscience which has been much discussed, relates to the question whether one can do more than it is his duty to do. In one of the most widely read Christian books of the second century, the *Shepherd of Hermas* said: "And if you do any good beyond what is commanded by God, you will gain for yourself more abundant glory, and will be more honored by God than you would otherwise be."[1] This conception of a virtue above what is required by the law, which was influential in the development of monasticism, took definite form in the scholastic doctrine of the "evangelical counsels" and works of supererogation. It was held that there are certain virtues, or degrees of virtue, which heaven does not indeed require, but with which heaven may be well pleased. They are not necessary, but they are commendable; and by means of them a higher perfection is to be gained than

[1] B. iii. *Similitude* 5. c. 3.

the law with its commandments contemplates. They are the superior virtues of those who have taken upon themselves special vows of poverty, chastity, or obedience, — they are the merits of the saints.

The distinction between the commandment, and what is added to it beyond that which is due, is to be found in Origen (see references in Herzog, *Real-Ency.* Art., *Consilia Evangelica*). Thomas Aquinas regards the *opera supererogationis* as better means to perfection, yet he says that the perfection consists principally and essentially in the commandments, secondarily and instrumentally in the counsels (*Summa*, ii. 2, 108, 184). This doctrine was fully developed in the monastic Catholicism; the reformers rejected with vigor the whole conception of meritorious works as unfounded in the Scriptures and contrary to the righteousness of faith. Later Roman Catholic writers have been less inclined to emphasize this distinction; but Möhler took up the defence of this doctrine with the assertion that "the delicacy and fineness of the idea of works which are more than satisfying," escapes the reformers because they do not admit the thought that man can be free from sins like impurity and immoderate ambition, etc. (*Symbolik*, s. 186). His contention called forth replies from many Protestant German writers; see Baur, *Gegensatz des Katholicismus und Protestantismus*, s. 301; Julius Müller, *Christian Doctrine of Sin*, vol. i. pp. 50–58.

We may assume that an ethical distinction which we find appearing very early in the history of Christian thought, which lies at the root of a vast monastic system, and which in one form or another persists in modern literature, has some truth at the core of it; yet a sound moral sense hesitates to admit that there can be a perfection to be coveted in excess of the common obligations of human life. If, therefore, we seek first to find the truth at the core of this doctrine of superior virtue, we may then more easily detect the fallacy of the so-called "evangelical counsels." The distinction does not seem at first thought to be unreal between duties that are plainly required and moral acts which are commendable. We may desire a character to show certain common fruits of righteousness without expecting it to favor us with a rare beauty and fragrance in the blossoming of its virtues; the fruit may be required, but the fairness and sweetness of the flower might seem to be an added grace. Moreover, we recognize as possible different degrees of the same

virtue; and it is not deemed obligatory that all the virtues should be combined in a single character in some superlative measure of each. Love may seem to be a superabundant energy in some rare natures. So one of the ablest of modern Roman Catholic controversialists finds in the nature of love a principle by which he defends the doctrine of meritorious works beyond the requirements of the law: "It is," says Möhler, "the way of love which stands far higher, infinitely higher than mere law, never to rest satisfied with its manifestations, and to be always inventive, so that believers of this sort often seem to men who stand on a lower step to be enthusiasts, visionaries, or fanatics."[1] This is true, that love as a motive is more than the commandment; that works done from love are works of a higher order than those wrought in slavish obedience. The obedience of love is more pleasing than the obedience of fear. But this difference in motives does not necessarily imply a corresponding difference between the ideal of the law and the ideal of love. Objectively, the law may aim at the same perfection which love delights to fulfil. In this superiority of love as a motive lies the truth which has given vitality to the idea of some superior virtue possible to the saints. Love as a joyous motive stands (as Möhler would say) far higher than law, and it will be always seeking to find new ways of showing its presence; love is too rich and overflowing ever to contain itself simply in the measures of a calculating conscientiousness; love as love has "the more abundant glory," of which the angelic shepherd taught Hermas. But when we have recognized this truth, we have also discovered the fallacy in this conception of a perfection which is more than the law commands. For the fount of the error lies in a confusion of the subjective value of motives, and the objective good which is to be attained. The law looks for the perfection which is to be reached through love. Protestantism is right in affirming the ideal perfection of the law; yet ancient fathers and modern Catholics are not without truth in the feeling which is at the heart of the

[1] *Symbolik*, s. 186.

false doctrine of meritorious works, that love is the fulfilling of the law.

This fallacy of regarding the law as satisfied with a less degree of virtue than love can apprehend has been rendered possible through the mistake of overlooking, as Rothe has observed, "the individual moral instance."[1] The law needs to be individualized in its special application to each particular obligation. What might be a work of supererogation, and therefore not a duty, to one man, may fall within the special obligation of another's life. The commandment of the law is universal; the particular duty under the law is to be determined in relation to all the conditions, relations, opportunities of the life of each individual. Thus to follow Christ is the duty of all believers; but in St. Peter's individual instance to follow Christ meant to leave all and to go with the Master wherever He went, as the seventy disciples were not required to do. There is, however, no superfluous merit in doing that which, under our common human obligations, the particular requirements of one's calling or opportunity make it his duty to do. Morality, as thus specialized in the personal instance and fitted to the form of the individual task, is always obligatory, and with an absolute obligation. The individualized duty, the personal task, be it great or small, high as the joy of martyrdom, or lowly as the humble service of the home, love ought always to fulfil.

The Christ came to do the Father's will in his Messianic life, and to meet his appointed hour. He could not have done only what other men did — he could not have done less than it was appointed him to do — and have remained sinless. There was nothing more that he could have done, and become thereby more acceptable to God. He fulfilled all righteousness in his perfect obedience unto death.[2]

[1] *Theologische Ethik*, §§ 805–808.

[2] If this necessary moral application of general law to the individual instance should be so conceived as to justify an individual making his life a law unto itself, that would be a perversion of it into antinomianism as harmful as the doctrine of the evangelical councils. It hardly needs to be observed that what has been said above relates to the application of the moral

3. In this connection we may consider, also, those moral perplexities which arise in cases of the apparent collision of duties. Many of the questions of casuistry result from such seeming conflict of duties; the casuist seeks to determine which among possible moral actions is the more probable course of duty. Practical life abounds in such questions, and the decision of them is not infrequently a severe trial to a sensitive conscience.

We cannot, however, admit any real conflict of duties. Strictly speaking, in such cases of moral perplexity there is a collision of moral interests, but not of duties. There is at any moment but one duty, the obligation which is the moral resultant from all the forces acting upon the conscience; — as the movement of a body under the influence of conflicting forces is the resultant motion of them all. The collision may often be sharp between opposing moral interests which have claims upon us; but the action to which we are in duty bound can be but one act.

These confusions of moral interests are a part of the moral discipline and education of this present world. They may arise from some crossing of the lines in which our lives are connected with one another. A single act which may seem simple enough in its direct consequences, we see cannot be carried through without touching, perhaps disastrously, other relationships, or entangling other interests which have their claims upon our consideration. A collision of duties in such instances seems to us unavoidable. How shall we choose? What shall be the determining principle of conduct?

Moreover, we recognize different moral aims of our endeavors in different spheres of action, all of which are ethically good; but the course of conduct which is necessary for the attainment of one end may seem at times to cross at right angles the line of action to be pursued if another justifiable aim of life is to be gained. How shall this conflict of moral aims be reconciled? The life-work

law, not to any making or becoming a law unto one's self. The "personal instance" is always to be in harmony with the law, an instance of law in the concrete reality of its obligation. See Rothe, *opus cit.* § 807.

may be chosen in view of some single end which it is rightly deemed should be made supreme; yet other ends, though regarded as subordinate, have their claims, and cannot be absolutely sacrificed, without a sense of moral dissatisfaction, even for the laudable purpose of pressing forward to the one chosen goal. Thus the claims of public and private life often present conflicting interests. A soldier's orders may require resolute forgetfulness of home, and the claims of his family, and his duty to his children. For the hour of soldierly daring these sacred interests of the lives of others in his life must be held in abeyance; they are not indeed denied, for they are kept sacred still in the brave man's heart. Yet there is but one duty to be followed with all the heart. That only is to be done which conscience sees to be the duty of the hour. Hence a decision of the duty to be done brings with it a sense of peace. There is always a certain air of peacefulness pervading a clear consciousness of duty. A sense of duty which does not bring with it a great restfulness of soul, is an imperfect sense of duty. Duty is unity of heart. It is the harmony of the will with opportunity. There is nothing under the whole heaven so absolutely tranquil and serene as a perfect sense of duty. Hence, also, the strength of it — the strength of the soul which is kept in perfect peace.

Great differences are to be observed among conscientious men in their power to come to clear and restful moral decision. It should be the aim of education to cultivate a conscience which shall be quick to discover under any circumstances the one duty which will prove to be the true reconciliation of conflicting claims upon the conscience.

There was no collision of duties in the life of Jesus. There was no hesitation in his action, no apparent moment of deliberation even concerning what he should do next, or what was the right word directly to be spoken. His deeds were instantaneous crystallizations of his thought. His words flow immediately out of his purpose, and fill with perfect truth the occasion by which they were called

forth. Yet no man has ever lived among more complex and conflicting claims. Eager interests of the present, and highest concerns of the future, were at the same time committed to his charge. There were works of healing to be wrought for poor sick folks in the streets of Capernaum, and a world's redemption also to be accomplished. The tender claims of his mother were to be reconciled with the public call upon him even in his boyhood to speak with a nobler wisdom in the temple among the doctors of the law. The multitude thronged him, and his disciples needed his private interpretations of the parables. The national expectations of the prophets of old were to be transfigured through his life into the glorious hope of the world's future. The law was to be done away in a new commandment which should prove its fulfilment. God and man were to be made one through his life and by his death. He was to leave his disciples, to be seen no more by them in Judea or on some mountain of Galilee; yet he was not to leave them comfortless, and his going from them was to be the coming of his Spirit to the world. It is impossible to conceive a life busied with more varied tasks, called by more incessant demands upon its energies, and occupied with vaster problems, present, future, eternal — all to be met and answered in three short years of earthly opportunity; — yet in that brief life, into which time and eternity poured their tremendous issues, the really wonderful thing is that there was no indecision, no note of inward perplexity, no doubt concerning the will of God immediately to be done, no mistake as to when his hour was come.

This example in Christ of perfect unity of life, is the ideal of the Christian conscience amid the conflicts and confusions of the world. A fine moral tact and power of almost instantaneous discovery of the single duty amid many claims, is a moral acquisition which is to be coveted among the best gifts of the Spirit. But it is not to be gained at once, nor except through much discipline and prayer.

V. THE CLASSIFICATION OF DUTIES

Moralists have adopted widely different schemes for the classification of duties. These are so numerous, so varied, and so changeable in their aspects, as they are presented by the shifting circumstances of life, that they appear to defy all classification, and to make any attempt to reduce them to a system seems almost a hopeless task. Even though we select a few general obligations as the primary ones, still these few selected duties will be found to be capable of almost endless permutations; though our bits of glass be few and of simple colors, in the kaleidoscope of human life, which is always turning, they will fall into endlessly diversified combinations.

The most, therefore, that any writer on ethics can hope to accomplish, will be to find some method of classification that may answer for a general description of the typical kinds of duties; we may seek to follow the large and flowing outlines of the moral landscape which lies before us with its changing lights and its indefinite diversity of details.

Three general principles of classification have been adopted in the books of ethics.

1. One method of classification has been derived from the nature of the action of the will.

The active intelligence may be differently characterized in its manner of acting, as it goes forth in several distinct ways towards the highest good.

So Schleiermacher divided philosophical ethics into two main divisions, as he conceived the activity of the reason of man to be organizing in nature, through which the good is produced, or as symbolizing, by which the good which is already attained is represented. And in both these main directions, as productive and as representative, the active reason is also to be regarded in its individual and its universal relation. In his Christian ethics (which Schleiermacher derived from the Christian consciousness), the reason in its action was regarded as either purifying, or extending, or representing the good. A simpler classification of duties from the nature of the action of the will involved in them might be obtained by viewing it either as productive or regulative action. The productive duties would be those by which new moral conditions and further good are brought about; the regulative duties would be those by which the facts and forces of life are assembled, adapted to each other, and brought into working unity and order.

The objection, however, to this method of classification is that it is altogether subjective, and it offers no simple and broad lines of ethical demarcation. These several qualities of active intelligence, these characteristic modes of the action of the will, shade into each other; and indeed one and the same action may be both productive and representative, both a manifestation of the good already attained and a means to further moral advancement. Yet our acts and habits may bear predominantly one of these characteristics, and may profitably be studied and criticised from the points of view which Schleiermacher chose as the determinative points of his ethical outlines of conduct and character.

2. Another method of classification of duties is derived from the relation of the action of the will to the object of its action.

Thus all moral activity is conceived of by Wuttke as a relation between the subject and the object of the action. It will be either a sparing the object by the subject, or an appropriating the object by the subject, or a forming the object by the subject; hence the fundamental forms of duty are these: to spare, to appropriate, to form. This is an interesting point of view from which to survey the field of human obligations. The duty of moral sparing, Wuttke urges, has been too much ignored in ethics, and should find some distinct mention and place in any scheme of duties. This is, however, an obligation which in other classifications may be treated among the limitations to be observed in each specific duty. Moreover, as this classification starts from the subject and regards the object as the end of the moral activity (Wuttke, *Ethics*, vol. ii. p. 180), it leaves no fitting place for those passive duties of the subject which may consist in letting the object react upon the subject, and thus allowing the subject to be formed in the mould of the object. These passive duties may be regarded under the obligation of the moral appropriation of the object by the subject; yet this leaves too much in the background the moral obligation of receiving the true life — of letting God's love fill and replenish the fountains of our life.

The same fundamental objection lies against this principle of classification that it is too subjective, and that our duties are not so easily to be kept apart and discriminated in any merely subjective method of arrangement. What may be logically distinguishable cannot always be so distinctly separated in real life. All the kinds of moral

activity which have been logically divided may co-exist in the same moral act and be necessary to its completion.

3. An opposite principle of classification of duties by reference to the different objects towards which the moral activity is directed has been more generally followed by ethical writers. Duty, it is said, implies action. It denotes the obligation of the will in action. Duties, therefore, may be conveniently arranged in relation to the main objects of human activity. Wide and varied as is the field of human action, we may determine a few simple and cardinal points from which to survey it. The individual is himself an object of all his action. His activities also touch others like himself. And around him also, subject to his action, and reacting upon him, is nature, and above him, in the spiritual realm of his life, is his God. The objects of his activity are then at most fourfold, — himself, society, nature, God. Or these cardinal directions of human activity may be reduced to three: (1) Duties towards the subject as his own object; (2) Duties towards his social environment; (3) Duties towards God. In this threefold classification man's relations toward nature are not regarded as direct objects of moral obligation, but whatever obligations may be recognized in these relations fall either under the idea of duties towards self, or of duties towards God. They may be contemplated in either or both of these lights. Kind treatment of animals, for instance, is due to one's own character and habit as a kind man. Cruelty towards the animal creation below man is to be condemned because of its inevitable immoral reactions on the man himself who is indifferent to the sufferings of animals. But, it may be urged, are not animal forms ends in themselves, and therefore do they not have some rights which superior beings are bound to respect? Is self-restraint in the treatment of the lower animal kingdom to be practised solely on account of its moral value in the life of man? Does not nature itself, and the whole animal creation, stand in some objective relation to the spirit of man, which ought to be recognized and observed by him? We may admit that it does; it is con-

gruous with our moral feeling to regard the whole realm of nature and life as having some relative independence and rights before our will, which set limits to the moral exercise of force by man over the natural creation. Thus the sportsman owns a certain unwritten law of sport, which limits to his uses the amount of game that he may shoot, or fish that he may kill. Yet when we seek to discover the ground of our moral feeling towards nature, and the reason for our moral regard for animals beyond any reactions of our treatment of them upon ourselves, we fail to find such ground of obligation immediately in nature itself, or in any moral claim of animate being in itself considered. For nature is throughout means for the higher self-conscious life. It is not properly in itself a moral end. No unintelligent and unmoral existence can be regarded as having its end of being in itself. But if we look more deeply into the innermost secret of nature, we may gain from a profound spiritual philosophy of it a rational ground for the immunity of the outward world from our lawless violence, and a moral obligation of humanity towards the animal kingdom. For behind nature is God; beneath all life is the living One. Nature throughout is manifestation of Spirit; it is the garment of the Divine. Nature is a sacred Scripture from God. It is fashioned, organized, and preserved as the word of the divine Thought and the revelation of an infinite Wisdom. It should command, therefore, our reverence. It is not in any part of it to be regarded as something common and unclean. To the eye of a spiritual faith nature is all holy ground, and as we walk upon it we are to take off our shoes and worship God. Its immediate relation to God as means of the divine objectifying of his eternal thought in visible forms, gives even to inanimate nature a worth beyond any value which it may acquire under the shaping of our hands or for our utilities. Nature, when seen to be full every evening with the Spirit, and fresh every morning with a divine greeting of light and life to the world, becomes to us a sacred revelation to be received by us reverentially and with grateful response of our spirit

to the One Spirit whose word and work it is. Still more must nature appear to us as something reverentially to be regarded in its higher forms of organized life and nearest approaches to consciousness. Hence our duty of humanity towards the animal kingdom becomes part of our general duty of reverence towards the living God. The divisions of duty which are thus obtained in this scheme of classification are intelligible and simple; and they have often been adopted by writers in the field of practical morals as the most convenient form of ethical classification.[1] It does not appear to us, however, to be a sufficient principle of classification, as will be seen from what follows.

4. In determining what method of discrimination among our duties it is best to follow, we should observe that every duty involves these two things, — a subjective sense of obligation, and a relation of the moral agent to some outward object as the end of his action. Our classification of the duties accordingly, should have respect both to the common principle of obligation and the different objects on which as moral ends the obligation may rest; in other words, the subjective obligation is to be differentiated in its relation to the several objective ends of moral activity.

The one common obligation of which we are conscious, is to realize the highest good. Our endeavor to do this becomes our virtue, which, as Aristotle rightly perceived, is inclusive of happiness. The general obligation of our life is to attain virtue, or to make the ideal real. Consequently, the supreme duty will be found contained in the conception of the highest good. But this one highest good is to be realized in many concrete goods. The ideal becomes real through the many virtues. The doctrine of the goods, therefore, in and through which the highest good is realizable, will determine our doctrine of duties. We may classify these in view of the specific concrete goods, and in relation to the particular virtues through which these goods are to be realized. Each virtue has its corresponding duty, for we are under obligation in general to make all the possible goods of life actual, to make the ideal real in every particular of it.

The obligation to seek the supreme good assumes, accordingly, more definite forms in reference to the possible objects of moral activity in

[1] Rothe objects to this mode of classification, that it does not proceed from an ethical principle, but defines duties by reference to things which lie outside ethics. He would find the general forms for the duties in the moral ends of actions. — *Theol. Ethik*, § 857 ff.

the spheres of moral life. These are in general two, — the sphere of the individual life — one's self as an object of moral activity, and the universal life in which the individual shares and is to be made perfect — the world as an object of moral action. Self and its environment constitute the two general objects of moral action. This environment of self is to be still further distinguished. It is material environment — body, matter, nature; it is also human environment — social life; moreover, it is spiritual environment — God — the Kingdom of God and his righteousness. But the first division (nature), as already seen, lies between the other two — the human and the divine; it is to be conceived as in part belonging to the one and in part to the other, as the conscious self appropriates it, and makes it a means of its own life, or as it is seen to be the work and manifestation of the spiritual, of the living God around the individual self.

This method of classification proceeds from an ethical idea, as Rothe insisted that it should do, — the idea of moral ends; and it proceeds to determine these ends concretely in relation to the chief objects of moral action. This method will yield a simple and workable scheme of moral classification. We shall divide duties accordingly into (1) duties in relation to self as a moral end; (2) duties in relation to others as moral ends (social duties); (3) duties in relation to God as willing the supreme end of being.[1]

In this method of classification by reference to the objective ends of moral action, we escape the difficulty of a merely subjective method to which experience may show little correspondence; but all divisions in practical ethics, it should be remembered, must have about them a certain

[1] Harms reduces all duties to social duties, inasmuch as duty relates to action, and action implies the relation of one person to another (*Ethik*, s. 147). But suppose only one finite being in existence, — would he have no duties? Rothe distinguished between duty and obligation, the latter implying another person to whom it is owed. If, however, we consider self as an object of our action, it would thereby become an object of moral obligation. Hence the common speech concerning duties to one's self is justifiable. Harms places duty as an intermediate between virtues and goods. He says: "Duty presupposes all virtues, and is directed towards all goods. Hence the general formula for duty is: Act constantly so, that all virtues may be active in you in relation to all goods" (*Ibid.* s. 151). This is true so far as it defines duties by a virtuous striving after moral goods.

Rothe argues against a threefold division, admitting only duties to self and others in relation to the supreme moral end, and regarding all duties as religious (*Theol. Eth.* § 857. Anm.). Our reasons for retaining the ordinary threefold division will be given in the chapter concerning duties to God.

logical abstractness, for in real life no virtue can exist in solitary perfection, and each duty bears within itself echoes of other duties. Moral obligations are woven intricately together, and after diverse patterns, in the web of life. It may be said with truth that all the virtues lie latent in any one virtue, and that all duties are implicit in the fulfilment of any single obligation perfectly. In this sense, and according to a more profound ethical conception than the Jewish thought of the law, the perfect man is he who keeps all the commandments; and he who breaks the least commandment breaks the whole law.

CHAPTER II

DUTIES TOWARDS SELF AS A MORAL END

DUTIES towards self are plainly recognized in the ethics of the New Testament. The second commandment implies that the obligation of a man to himself at least stands on the same level with, and is equal to, his obligation towards his neighbor. The commandment of altruism — Thou shalt love thy neighbor — rests on the assumption of a love to one's self. Some self-love is taken for granted in the commandment as the measure of love to one's neighbor. And numerous precepts in the epistles of the New Testament assume that self is a moral end to be regarded. One is exhorted to prove himself; to examine himself; to "have his glorying in regard of himself alone"; to keep himself from evil; to know that he is "a temple of God" in which the Spirit dwells. And quite after the form of the second commandment of Jesus, the apostle Paul, when he wished to settle on Christian principles some social confusions among recent converts from Grecian looseness of morals, exhorted husbands to love their wives as their own bodies, "He that loveth his own wife loveth himself";[1] thereby assuming, as does the second commandment, that there is a self-love which is not to be confounded with selfishness, but which is natural and right; there is a duty towards self to be taken for granted. The truth of this moral assumption of the second commandment, and of such precepts in the epistles, becomes evident when we reflect that each soul is an end to itself in the sight of God, for to each it has been given in some measure to have life in itself. This bestowal of self-contained life, like the life of God in Himself, is not indeed an absolute gift to us; — we live in God and in absolute dependence on Him; — but so far as

[1] Eph. v. 28.

we have received power to live within our finite selves, and may maintain for ourselves our inward self-consciousness, we are become spiritual ends of the creation, and are no more mere means for the use of others or even for any arbitrary will of God, nor for our own selfish pleasure. It would be immoral for us not to regard ourselves as moral ends of creation. Not to respect and to cherish this self-life which has been delegated to the soul from its divine source, and which in its finite measure is like the infinite self-being of God, would be disloyalty, unfaithfulness, deadly sin. A human personality is a sacred trust of being. Every man holds himself in trust from his Creator. Although animals have like us the instinct of self-preservation, they cannot share with us this godlike power of holding self in trust for noble uses. But the soul can say to itself: "I have been raised out of unconscious nature; and am a personal being, knowing myself and moving off on lines of my own choice and aims. I will keep that which has been committed to my charge; I am responsible to myself for myself." A human soul is itself an ever present and conscious supernaturalness in the midst of nature, and it would surrender its own glory should it cease to regard itself as of more value than the birds of the air or the lilies of the field. This duty of self-regard, which follows immediately from any spiritual conception of the worth of human nature, may also be ethically deduced, as we have already observed (p. 226), from the nature of an adequate idea of what love is. For love is self-affirmation as well as self-impartation; it must first be self-affirmation in order that it may become self-imparting love. We cannot give worthily what we have not esteemed to be worthy. A friend who does not keep himself in the pure worth of his own soul has nothing worth giving to another. True self-love (not love of the happiness of self, but of the worth of the self) is therefore antecedent condition of all genuine and worthy love of others.[1]

[1] "A love without any self-assertion were an indefinite melting into the great All, a self-dissolution," etc. — Martensen, *Christian Ethics* (*Special*), vol. i. p. 159.

It is not difficult to distinguish this proper self-regard from selfishness, which is its counterfeit and its degradation. For selfishness is not true love of self, but a false love of self. It is regard for self in the wrong place, and at the wrong time. It is taking self out of its true relations, and putting it into a wrong position toward all around it. Selfishness is a wilful exaltation of self, and a claim to an independence of one's own life from other life, which violates the larger moral order of things. The request of the prodigal, "Father, give me the portion of thy substance that falleth to me," and his departure to a far country, and the misery consequent upon his separation of himself from the natural relationships of his home, afford a complete history of selfishness in its isolation and false independence, in its utter degradation of the true self and loss of the good which it might have kept in the father's house. When the prodigal's false life drew near its wretched end, and he was about to return to seek again his true life, it is said with profound ethical truth, "He came to himself." The beginning of virtuous life is a coming to one's self. And it is never selfish to be one's self, and to remain true to self.

It is the first law of nature that the order of the whole consists in the fidelity of each created thing to itself. It would not be selfish for an atom to persist against all impacts of other atoms in being an atom still; the earth is not self-seeking in continuing true to its own orbit; the sun is not selfish in shining with irrepressible radiance as the sun; man is not selfish in resolving to be manly; angels are not selfish in holding above all touch of earthliness their angelic beauty; seraphs are not selfish in gazing into the immediate glory of their God; God himself is not selfish in being God over all blessed forever. But it would be selfish for any created thing to choose, if it could, to cease to be itself; should an atom seek to expand itself to a world, or a world seek to shine as a star, or a sun grow weary of shining for all its attendant planets,— such departure from nature's bounds and ends would be the analogy of selfishness in the moral order. It would

be selfishness inconceivable in God, should He grow weary of receiving the worship of the universe as the source and fountain of all life; it is selfishness in man not to be man, and to fulfil all the possibilities, as well as to keep within the divine limitations, of his human nature.

So far the natural conscience may discriminate between that true self-love which is the necessary ground for all moral benevolence, and that perverted self-love which would absorb in self-seeking the whole moral order. In the moral consciousness of the Christian man further differences between true self-love and its counterfeits have become manifest. For the self which the Christian man regards as worthy of his respect is the new selfhood which is born of the Spirit within him. It is not his own poor idea of himself which attracts him, but God's idea of him as he apprehends more and more that for which also he is apprehended in Christ Jesus.[1] It is the redeemed Christian selfhood that he cherishes, and which he will suffer no power of evil to take from him. It is the inward man created anew in the image of God unto good works, whom he regards with honor, and for whose sake he keeps himself from sin. He will love so well this new Christian self, which is his true, coming self, that for its sake he will be willing to count all things but loss. This perception and respect for the forming Christian self, will preclude pride and self-glorying. It is a regard for self born in humility. It is a love for the best self which springs from crucifixion of the old and sinful self. It is a self-respect which has been regained from a profound conviction of sin, and which exists in grateful dependence on the grace of God. Its voice will be like the apostle's triumph in his endeavor to find the righteousness of God: "For I through the law died unto the law, that I might live unto God. I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me."[2]

[1] Phil. iii. 12.

[2] Gal. ii. 19-20.

The Christian man in this righteousness of faith can be the magnanimous man up to the full truth of Aristotle's idea of magnanimity; yet he will preserve his self-respect and nobleness in a humility which Aristotle could not conceive, but without which his great-minded man remains a pitiable example of pride and self-glorying. They are forever teachable and humble as little children, yet strong and glorious as the sons of God, who can say, "And he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever." [1]

We turn next, accordingly, to the chief duties which are contained in a true self-regard.

1. The Duty of Self-Preservation.

The instinct of self-preservation is profoundly significant of the nature of life as something which was born to continue unbroken by any stroke of death from without. We feel it to be the intent of life to persist and not to give place to another. Life, not death, if we may judge by the primal instincts of our being, is Lord; life is first, and last, and always; death is an intermediate and alien power. This significance of the tendency of life to preserve itself without break of continuity, belongs to our philosophical study of nature; we are concerned with it here only as it is the natural ground of a moral obligation which springs from it into the ethical consciousness. So far, indeed, as self-preservation remains only a deep natural instinct, it cannot be spoken of as a duty; but so far as it gives rise to the distinct idea of keeping self in its integrity unharmed, and to a choice of means for that end, it falls within the sphere of moral obligation.

Whatever belongs to the essential idea of a man is to be kept sacred, and all means possible for the maintenance of the whole of one's nature are to be chosen under a sense of obligation to one's self. This duty is not met by the effort to preserve a part only of one's human nature: nor is the first obligation of self-preservation discharged by a manner of life which willingly sacrifices any element of man's com-

[1] Rev. i. 6.

plex but integral selfhood to some other faculty or function of his personal nature. The duty of self-preservation relates both to body and soul, and to the preservation of each in its due relation and ministry to the other. The whole man, as a living unity of powers, is to be protected from evil and defended against loss or corruption.

(1) This duty of self-preservation embraces therefore the maintenance of all bodily and spiritual functions, as well as their mutual harmony and helpfulness. Man's providence over himself should take thought of all things pertaining to his being, as God's providence holds the whole man, body, soul, and spirit, in its hand.

The full conception of this duty will be seen to contain the answer to any self-limiting or self-destructive asceticism. Atrophy of any power, when voluntarily suffered, is a failure of proper self-regard. Every muscle in the body has its moral right to be used, each nerve its ethical claim for its full vitality in the harmony of the whole body, which should be kept in its integrity. An ascetic mutilation or careless neglect even of any natural powers and functions of body, mind, or heart, is a mistaken offence against the first commandment of self-preservation. Nor does such neglect and atrophy of any part of human nature find justification in the ethics of the New Testament. For when did our Lord ever teach that self-denial is good for its own sake, that sacrifice is prized by God for its own merit! Self-denial, he always said to his disciples, was to be for the gospel's sake. The thought of another's good is the condition in which sacrifice becomes noble. To take up the cross simply for the sake of cross-bearing, would not be an imitation of the Lord who gave his life for the world. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus taught, it is true, a comparative morality of self-mortification. He said, "And if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee." He taught that such mutilation and loss was better than to be cast with the whole body into hell; but Jesus did not say that this is best. It may be the better thing for a man, but not the best thing. Jesus did not make the ascetic mistake of imagining that a man who has been obliged to pluck out

his eye, or to cut off his right hand in order that his soul may be saved at all, is better than the man who with two good hands and two pure eyes enters into eternal life. It is better to be saved than miserably to perish. It is best to be saved abundantly. "For thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."[1]

Jesus had no need to pluck out his own eye in which heaven dwelt, nor to cut off his own arm which was outstretched to save others. The Church of the Son of man is not most happily conceived as a hospital for one-eyed and one-armed saints. "I came," said our Lord, "that they may have life, and may have it abundantly."[2]

A large conception of the duty of self-preservation will prevent also our falling into narrow and one-sided ideas of self-culture. The duty of self-preservation is a duty of symmetry. It is not met if one so lives as to sacrifice the body to the brain, or to sacrifice the mind to the heart, or to make any one power of human nature mere means to other faculties, and not in itself a part of the whole end of self-development. For even those powers which are subservient to our higher faculties belong, as in themselves good, to the perfection of human nature. The body is not only means to the soul, but there is a sense in which the soul is also means to the body, which without it could not reach in any animal form such worth and grace. The bodily members may be deemed to be ends of the creation so far as they sum up its possibilities in the direction of their perfection, — the perfect eye, or the true touch, or the healthful brain in its unity with the spirit, may itself be considered as an end of the good purpose of the Creator so far as matter can be furnished for mind. Not absolutely indeed apart from their spiritual possession and use can the organs of the body be so regarded as moral ends; but in their perfection after their kind, and in their fitness for the soul, they are attainments of a good which is an end of God's creative ways, — even the good of the union of mind with matter for the fulness and joy of created life. In this

[1] 2 Pet. i. 11.

[2] John x. 10.

aspect, as relative ends, as consummation of matter for spirit, our physical powers have worth and are to be respected in the discharge of our duty of self-preservation.

The ethics of the New Testament recognizes this relative worth of the lower powers and functions of man's nature, for it insists that these are to be held above corruption by the Christian man: "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have from God."[1]

(2) The duty of self-preservation comprises the obligation of self-defence against any physical violence or danger, and of self-protection in the use of the means for the sustentation of life. The former duty is not now to be discharged often by the individual exercise of force, as in ruder times; yet some power, and consciousness of power to protect one's self from injury, is a part still of manly virtue. The ability, likewise, to gain and to keep the means for the sustentation of life, is now largely bound up with the industrial capability of the community of which one is a member; but it is an old truism in morals, which should not be merged in any obligation of society to its members, that every man owes to himself his own livelihood, and that he is under obligation to win it from his economic environment. The means of support are not absolutely a duty which society owes to a man, an obligation of all to each; but this is man's first duty to himself. If the conditions of society take from him his ability to gain the means of self-support, that may be a distinct wrong which may need to be remedied; but the ability to work for a living imposes the duty of work, and the obligation of self-preservation is not to be shifted from the individual to society. It is truer to say every man owes himself a living than to say that society owes him a living.

(3) The duty of self-preservation embraces the obligations of all those virtues which are conducive to healthful and vigorous life, — such as chastity, temperance, moderation, self-control, and a general reasonableness in the methods and fashions of business and pleasure. There

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 19.

are other and still higher reasons for the practice of such virtues; some of them are obligations due to others still more than to one's self; but, on the lower grounds of self-preservation, these common virtues of temperance in all things, and abstinence from every lust which destroys the life of body or soul, are among the primary obligations of a wholesome conscience. The spiritual conscience emphasizes and intensifies them; but these are common duties of nature which Epicurus as well as Aristotle, and all schools of moralists, have been resolute to teach.

(4) The obligation to keep ourselves in the integrity of our whole being, will impel us also to discriminate in outward fashions and customs between those things which are healthful and those which are hurtful, and to give the utmost possible wholesomeness to our habits and surroundings.

Consequently the exhausting haste to be rich, the dissipation of energy in multitudinous cares, the scattering of one's vitalities among too many pursuits, the failure to cheer up the spirits by sufficient amusement, or to keep the blood red in the veins by the glow of exercise, the enervation of soul as well as body from lack of sunshine and out-of-door life, — these, and many other physical misdemeanors which may rob us of health and power, are evils to be guarded against with watchful common sense; and when they may be avoided by care on our part, if not prevented, they become sins against ourselves as really, although not so grossly, as any other bodily intemperance. The simple and broad duty of rightful self-regard, of true self-love, will lead us to subject to ethical scrutiny all our bodily habits and our fashions of life, as well as our food and raiment, our ways of working, our seasons of relaxation, and hours of sleep.

It is, in general, a Christian duty to have a conscience void of offence against the physical laws of our being. This is indeed a limited obligation; it is conditioned by the claims of other elements of our nature and must be held subject to the demands of man's whole ethical task in this world. The resultant duty from the collision with

this physical interest of other claims and necessities of man's calling, may involve the self-sacrifice of some physical good, or willingness to make a temporary demand upon one's physical energies beyond the restorative power of nature for the season of unusual exertion; — we may deem it right at times to draw on our physical capital for higher ends, as well as to exhaust our daily physical interest of strength and vitality; or there may be placed before the spirit of a man the duty of absolute surrender of his physical existence, and the crown of martyrdom. But, abstracted from these considerations of other and higher interests, this duty of self-preservation, — body, soul, mind, and heart, — is to be deemed a primary obligation of human life, its first faithfulness to itself.

(5) Moreover, this obligation to live should control our whole thought of death. To the Christian conscience especially the thought of death will be brought under the larger conception of life and the moral law of life. For in the view of the Christian man death is only an apparent break in the continuity of life, a momentary interruption of the moral task of living, but no real break of the spiritual continuity of being. The thought of death becomes therefore in every way subordinate to, and is to be comprehended in, the thought of life. Death is to be taken into the plan of life as a moment of it; death is to be met and passed through as we would carry on to completion the one moral purpose of life. Death, therefore, will be regarded not simply as a fatal accident which must at some time happen to every man, nor will it be conceived simply as the compulsory surrender of life to the grasp of a dread foe from whose hand perhaps some mightier power may rescue it; but rather death will be conceived as another step to be taken, when we come to it, in the way of life. Death, therefore, becomes itself a part of duty — one of the duties of life. Death falls with all other actions and events into the obligation of life and its perfecting. Not only must we die; but it is our duty to go through death on our way of life, and to go down through death with a good conscience. The duty of self-preservation is the obligation of living

that kind of life which we have reason to believe will best survive the shock of death, and awake to the fullest and largest life after death. The Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the dead guarantees the continuity of our life in all its constitutive elements; our embodiment has therefore some future as well as present significance. It is at least to the future perfected life as the seed is to the flower, or the green blade to the full grown ear. Care then for this body, and training of those faculties which are partly physical and partly spiritual, — such as the acquisition of skill in cunning workmanship, of artistic touch, of ability to perceive all fair colors and to enjoy harmonious sounds, — these and all rational developments of the embodied soul are to be regarded not as moral tasks for this present life only, but as a preparation of the whole personal being for that life which in all its essential elements and constitutive factors is to be continued beyond death.

We may gain a still higher and more Christian thought of death as a human duty as well as a divine decree. For we may go down actively to meet death, and to some degree be not merely passive spectators, but willing participants in the necessity of our dying. So far as we are permitted to follow the experiences of the dying up towards the very moment when the gates of consciousness on this side are closed, — at least among those who have so lived that they are well prepared to take the next step of life through death, — we may often witness a spiritual greeting by them of death, and perceive exercised by them a strength of soul in the immediate contact with death, which is more than a passive and compulsory acquiescence in it. The soul becomes an interested and active moral participant in the dissolution of this mortality. The spirit will summon up its interior energies, concentrate its powers of life in one single act of faith, and march on with strength even through the gates of death. There is spiritual victory in its last prayer, and triumphal act of self-committal to the divine decree of its death. So Christians have died. So the death of the Son of man was an act of his spirit

in the discharge of the duty for which his whole life had been sent from God. Christ in his last words on the cross met death not passively, but actively, in an outgoing faith of soul, with a will of entire obedience, and by an act of complete committal of himself to the living God: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Thus death to the Son of man was no fatality; no imposition of necessity to which he must bow; no dread and loss of soul; but dying to the Christ was an intense moment of spiritual life; for the Christ to die was to win the victory over death. Henceforth the dutiful Christian sense of death is to be expressed in that apostolic word of triumph over it,— "O death, where is thy victory!"

Such being the Christian duty of the self-preservation of spiritual life through death, it follows that certain commonly cherished thoughts with regard to death are not to be held as ethical by the Christian conscience. There are, in particular, two opposite thoughts of death which fall under the same moral condemnation. The one is an excessive shrinking from the thought of death. Aristotle expressed the dismal thought of death which haunted the joy of ancient life, when he said, "Death is the most terrible of all things; for it is a limit; and it is thought that to the dead there is nothing beyond, either good or bad."[1] But to the Christian faith death is no more a limit of life. It is something ignoble to live in the fear of death, and this natural ignobleness of the fear of death to the spirit of a man is left without excuse in the Christian revelation of death as the gate of life. A human soul living in the communion of the Holy Ghost ought not to be held in bondage by the fear of death. Our funeral customs, so far as they are not brightened by a cheerful hope, and our signs of grief, so far as they are not symbols also of the promise of the richer life, are pagan and not Christian customs. If something is due to the expression of our present sorrow and loss, something also would seem to be required in our emblems of mourning as expression of our prophetic sense of love's eternal gain in the life that

[1] *Nic. Eth.* iii. 6.

has entered into its heavenly completion. The early believers followed a Christian impulse when they clothed themselves in white and observed as feast-days the deaths of the martyrs and saints. The ethics of the Christian hope of life has no little reformatory work to do among the funeral customs and emblems which have survived from the hopelessness of a world that knew not the risen Lord.

Another and opposite unethical feeling with regard to death consists in an excessive desire for it. A sentimental longing for death betrays sometimes a weakness of soul in its grasp upon the moral task of life. We were born to live, not to die. Life is always present opportunity and present obligation. To long to escape from life is usually a desire to avoid present duty. There is no virtue in vain indulgence in the luxury of grief. Hope of the hereafter and its completions may be welcomed as love's own prophet in the soul; but duty is man's daily and ever present friend; and when all else seems taken, duty, and its strong friendship, will remain.

(6) The consideration already noticed that the duty of self-preservation is a limited duty, opens another question which from antiquity has engaged the attention of moralists: Has a man ever the right to take his own life? If he has such right, can suicide ever be regarded as a duty? Or is the duty of self-preservation an absolute obligation so far as our power over our own physical life is concerned?

The instinctive conscience of mankind has had in all the generations but one voice in this matter. But the educated conscience has not always spoken with clear tones concerning suicide. The natural judgment of mankind has looked upon it with abhorrence; the philosophers have sometimes contemplated it with favor. What does the spiritual conscience, the conscience informed with the Spirit of Christ, have to say about it? Or must we decide between nature and the philosophers without any further light from the Christian consciousness of the significance of life?

Let us see first how the matter stands between nature and some of the philosophers. A common Grecian concep-

tion of life led the people to regard suicide not only as unnatural, but also as an unauthorized breach by the individual will of the social order into which man is born, and to which every citizen is under obligation. Aristotle, with his practical ethical sense, reflects also a common attitude of the Grecian mind toward suicide when he pronounces it to be cowardice.[1] The Stoics and the Epicureans, however, did not agree with Aristotle in this matter; although reasoning from different starting-points, they both reached the conclusion that suicide is permissible, and even to be commended when there seem to be good reasons for it. It is noteworthy that when once any cause had been admitted to be an adversity sufficient to justify suicide, the number of such exceptional reasons for self-destruction continually increased, until trivial misfortunes were regarded as sufficient occasions for bidding farewell to life. It was said that only a single way leads into life, but a thousand ways lead out of it. "The door is open," — such was the doctrine of the possible exit from life which was preached by the Stoics, and with increasing facility their practice followed the theory. Slight ailments were sometimes deemed sufficient provocations for so serious a step. Zeno is said in his old age to have hanged himself because he had broken one of his fingers; and his disciple, Cleanthes, chose to starve himself to death because his gums were sore.

It is significant that modern statistics of suicide show a larger proportion of self-inflicted deaths among the higher and more educated classes than among those who live closer to nature, or whose labor brings them into wholesome touch with the soil.[2] This may be due in part to the increased liability to brain diseases which accompany a disproportionate use of that organ; and it may result in part from the higher pressures of life and the more sudden shocks of excitement to which the upper and wealthier classes are exposed. But we may discover in it also a tendency in

[1] "But to die, and thus avoid poverty or love, or anything painful, is not the part of a brave man, but rather of a coward; for it is cowardice to avoid trouble; and the suicide does not undergo death because it is honorable, but in order to avoid evil." — *Nic. Eth.* iii. 7.

[2] See Paulsen, *System der Ethik*, s. 400.

modern civilization to repeat the phenomenon which the ancient world presented in its earlier instinctive abhorrence of self-destruction and its subsequent artificial justification of suicide among the philosophers.[1]

The judgment of the Christian conscience on this subject in the first centuries was somewhat confused by the examples of the voluntary surrender of life which the Christians found in such stories as Samson's destruction of himself with the whole house in which he had been imprisoned; and the cruelties of persecutors, who violated all rights of men and women, seemed at times to render suicide for the Christian the only honorable way of escape.[2] In time, however, the conscience of the Church affirmed with vigor the verdict of nature against the suicide; his burial was forbidden on consecrated ground.

Latterly only occasional voices of questioning have been raised as to the ethics of suicide.

One of the latest German writers, Paulsen (who follows in general the Aristotelian ethics), has cautiously defended the act of suicide from the implication of the charge of immorality (*opus cit.* s. 462). Paulsen's discussion of the subject, however, rests entirely on certain utilitarian considerations concerning the value of life under all circumstances; and he urges that suicide does not necessarily imply a degree of hardened obliquity on the part of the person who flings away life, for as matter of fact suicides are rare among the shameless classes, while the person who has moral sense enough to feel shame or disgrace, the man who is under an overpowering sense of self-condemnation, will sit as judge upon himself, pronounce his own sentence, and act as his own executioner. So Paulsen argues the act of Judas in hanging himself, instead of getting what he could from the use of the thirty pieces of silver, indicates that he was not

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[1] In the legal codes of the Hebrews no mention is made of suicide, and we must refer to a later period the origin of the custom which Josephus mentions of leaving the bodies of those who have taken their own life unburied until sunset, as well as his saying that this "crime is punished by our most wise lawgiver." — *Bellum Jud.* iii. 8.

[2] Eusebius mentions with evident approval instances in which holy and admirable women escaped violation by self-destruction (B. viii. 12, 14). Of a Christian woman, illustrious at Alexandria, whom the Emperor Maxentius attempted to overcome, he relates: "She requested but a little time, as if now for the purpose of adorning her body: she then entered her chamber, and when alone thrust a sword into her breast. Thus dying immediately, she indeed left her body to the conductors; but in her deed, more effectually than any language, proclaims to all who are now and will be hereafter, that virtue, which prevails among Christians, is the only invincible and imperishable possession."

totally depraved, and had not lost all sense of shame. Plausible, however, as may seem the utilitarian considerations to which Paulsen refers in his cautious plea for the morality of certain cases of suicide, his argument lies wholly on the surface of life, and does not reach down to any essential and permanent ethical principle. A review of the history of opinions on this subject may be found in Lecky's *Hist. of European Morals*, vol. ii. pp. 46–65.

In view of occasional utilitarian apologies for suicide, and also the temptations of despair in modern life, we should inquire what light the Christian conscience has to throw upon the act of self-destruction. No text of Scripture in either Testament refers directly to it, although many have been quoted which may be made to bear indirectly upon it. The silence of the Bible on this subject may be explained, as Rothe intimates, from the fact that in the biblical ethics the possibility of any desire for suicide was not contemplated. The Old Dispensation was the covenant of promise, and the New Testament is a gospel of hope. The Christian life became an expectation of the coming of the Lord. Suffering was to be endured, for the Lord is at hand. No one need wish to fly from life, for he shall reap in due time if he faints not. Hence it may be said that the primitive Christian view of life excludes any possible thought of suicide. The desire to take one's self from life would be itself a lack of faith in the Lord's promise.

The Christian conscience has become set against the very thought of suicide for the following reasons. The life of man in its integrity as life of body, soul, and spirit, is given to us from God; hence there is a divine as well as human interest invested in it. A man's life in all its powers and faculties is a personal trust from his God. It would be plainly immoral to destroy our spiritual being, if we could; but the body is organ of the spirit, and is also a part of our spiritual and moral trust of being from God. It is our trust fund of being, not our absolute property. We have no right to spend or to scatter a trust-fund at our own pleasure. Moreover, to the Christian conscience human life, in all its constitutive elements and powers, has been redeemed in Christ, and each life is to

pass in this world through his redemptive processes until, so far as possible on earth, its full salvation shall be accomplished. To assume power to stop at any moment this redemptive process, in any direction of it, — as on the physical side at least it would be cut short by the termination, through one's own act, of existence in this disciplinary world, — would be an interference with God's purpose of human education, an act of truancy from this present school of life, for which there is no sufficient moral excuse, and which no one of us has authority to commit. The child of God cannot at his own will excuse himself from God's school. The Christian conscience therefore urges with still greater spiritual insistence the reasons against suicide which moral philosophy has emphasized.

Kant regarded suicide as destructive of morality. "One cannot dispense with his personality so long as the word relates to duties; consequently, so long as he lives; and it is a contradiction that he should have authority to withdraw himself from all responsibility, *i.e.* freely so to act as though he needed no authority for this action. To destroy the subject of morality in his own person is as much as to annihilate morality itself, in its existence, so far as he can, from the world," etc. (*Metaphysik der Sitten*, *Tugendlehre*, § 6, s. 252). Fichte puts the whole subject from the philosophical point of view very clearly in these words: "My life is the exclusive condition of the fulfilment of the law through me. Now it is absolutely commanded me to fulfil the law. Therefore, it is absolutely commanded me to live, in so far as this is dependent on myself. This commandment is directly contradicted by the destruction of my life by myself. It is accordingly absolutely against duty. I cannot destroy my life without withdrawing myself so far as I can, from the supremacy of the moral law. . . . I will no longer live, means, therefore, I will no longer do my duty" (*Sittenlehre*, B. iv. s. 263).

Still another view of this subject remains to be taken. Each life belongs to others' lives. No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself alone. To live is thus not only an individual duty, but also a social obligation. The whole body has its rights in every member. Even, therefore, if in the light simply of individual duty it could be made to appear that suicide is not an avoidance of the personal obligation to live, there would still remain the further question whether suicide were not a violation of the social order and a sin against humanity. If, under

any circumstances, taking one's own life might be deemed excusable, so far as one's personal investment and interest in life are concerned, still the community would need to define and to protect its rights in the lives of individuals. Those moralists, therefore, who limit their discussion of duties to utilitarian motives, should urge the larger claims of social utilities whenever a question of the right of the individual to absent himself entirely and forever from humanity is under discussion. Although in extreme misfortune or in remediless and dependent sickness the loss of an individual life might seem a gain to the general good, it would be a dangerous social policy to leave the determination of the social right in the individual wholly to his private judgment, especially as that might be weakened by the blow of adversity or obscured by disease; and utilitarian regard for the welfare of the "social tissue" would seem to require some public tribunal as the conservator of the interests of society in every individual life. Suicide, on this theory of morals, could be made socially legitimate only as it might be socially authorized. It would be still a crime unless it received some judicial authorization. The individual should not be allowed to exercise what is certainly not simply a private right, (if it can be regarded as in any sense a right,) without the judicially determined authorization of the other party in interest. On the lowest possible view suicide should be condemned as an individual act, because life is not simply nor solely a private affair, but is a part of the social order, and the relation in which the individual is bound to the social whole should not be terminated at his personal instance. Consequently, in view of social utilities, as well as the higher estimate of human life as a divine trust, suicide has no ground of justification before the Christian conscience. Admitting the force of the general considerations which have been adduced, we may follow the casuists to the further question whether there can be any possible exceptions to the moral law by which suicide is condemned.

Such instances have been supposed in the books, and may possibly present themselves in actual life. It has been

asked, for example, whether a woman might not be justified in taking her own life in order to escape inevitable dishonor. But the real question in such imaginable cases is not one of permissible suicide; it concerns rather the means of self-defence which may be used against dishonor. Honor should be esteemed more than life; but in this case spiritual dishonor could arise only from non-resistance or some complicity in the crime. If, in an extreme case, the resistance should be carried to the point of self-destruction, the act could be conceived to be morally justifiable, not as a suicide, but only, under the circumstances, as a necessary act of self-defence.

There is less casuistry, and more pathos in the question which real life sometimes suggests, whether a helpless and hopeless invalid, who is a burden to others who can ill bear the expense, may not as an act of self-sacrifice take a deadly potion, not from the desire to escape suffering, but for the sake of relieving others from prolonged distress. This Scripture has been quoted by such: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends,"[1] and the question has been asked, May not sacrifice of life be self-inflicted, and the crown of martyrdom won by one's own courage in giving up life for another?

To this pathetic argument of helpless and loving affliction, it may at once be answered that the Christ, who recognized as no other the greatest claim of love in giving up life, was content to wait for his hour from the Father; and that in following his example, whatever may befall, every disciple must also wait his hour from the Father, who has sent the soul on its earthly errand, and who only can know what time is best for its recall. Even though such a person should seek to judge duty by the probable consequences and immediate utilities, no one can determine whether the best service to others may be rendered by remaining as a burden which they are to learn to bear as part of their life's training, or by being taken bodily away from their concern and obligation. The influences

[1] John xv. 13.

and the issues of a single life are too complex, too intricate, and too far-reaching in their eternal as well as temporal effects, for us to take them in hand, and to decide when our task has been accomplished here, and the hour for our discharge is come. But further than this, it may be urged that the general principle of duty, so far as the preservation of life is concerned, admits from its nature of no exceptions, for it is the principle of an absolute dependence on the living God and an absolute trust in the Redeemer of life from death.

Still another and a somewhat different class of questions relates to the duties of co-operating with others under all conceivable circumstances in the preservation of human life. In general there is no doubt of duty here. Life is to be saved. It is of such value as to create an obligation to save it which is immediately incumbent on all who have power to help save it. But what of those exceptional instances where the life seems to have lost all value to itself and others, — where a person has become useless and worse than useless from hopeless disease? The general obligation to save life may be admitted as applying to such cases, and all the laws of civilized peoples forbid a savage abandonment of the aged, the infirm, and the helpless. Not even the hard and fateful law of the survival of the fittest has power to take from the heart of humanity the moral commandment of hospitals and life-saving stations, and all possible appliances for the preservation and prolongation of human life. But extreme cases arise which may offer apparent exceptions. Should the resources of medical science, for example, be taxed to keep the sufferer's breath in the body to the last possible moment? Or should we be left to die, according to the course of nature, when by artificial means a life of suffering may be prolonged? What in such cases should be the ethics of the medical profession?

The question touches both the right of a man to be let alone to die, and also the duty of others to help him in the effort to preserve his life. The general ethical rule is that life is to be fought for by all the resources of science

until the end. The rule is based on the general duty of the preservation of ourselves and others to the utmost of our ability; and also it is enforced by considering the residual ignorance even of our medical science concerning the probabilities of life or death. The maxim that nature is to be helped to the last in the struggle for life is rightly held as the rule, the only safe rule, of medical ethics in the treatment of disease. But as science advances both in its alleviating agencies and in the sureness of its prognosis of disease, may this general ethical maxim of the medical profession receive modification or limitation from the claims of benevolence? In proportion as it becomes revealed to the eye of medical science that the prolongation of life will ensure only the continuance of suffering, and no reasons exist in the claims of others upon the hopelessly diseased why the days of his affliction should be lengthened, it might seem that the aid which medical skill may give in the struggle of life should cease to be an effort to help nature against the course of nature, and to keep soul and body of wretchedness together as a triumph of medical skill, while the resources of the profession may be morally devoted to the lesser endeavor of mitigating the pains of the sufferer and rendering the descent into the grave less physically terrible. In any case, medical science should withhold her hand from a positive interference which would ensure death; — a quieting balm may be given, but not a deadly potion; — positive interference, in favor of death, with another's life, would be an interference which, even though suggested by benevolence, no man has authority to render, and which is also contrary to general considerations of utility. The sacredness of life, and God's responsibility for it, forbid the assumption of any medical lordship over it.

(7) The right to life and all necessary action for its preservation extends farther than the acquisition and retention of the means of physical sustenance in just relations to the rights of other men; it embraces besides some right to several things which fall within the claims of a wholesome personal existence among other persons.

Many minor but in their way important conditions of life are thus to be brought under the obligation of wise self-preservation, — this duty being, however, always regarded as a conditional one, and in particular instances of its claims requiring to be morally harmonized with other ethical interests. Among these consequential rights and obligations of self-preservation may be mentioned the right to privacy, and the duty likewise of protecting the proper privacy of individual life. Mr. Lowell, in the "Cathedral," has called one of the evil spirits of modern life, "the New World's new fiend, Publicity." In this newspaper age private life seems to be fast losing all its sacredness. No home seems so lowly as to be safe from the intrusion of the press. No name is so honorable as to be above the touch of the reporter. No story of domestic life is regarded as holy. All things of all men are considered to be matters of news for the daily papers to gather. This publicity of modern life is not, however, an unmixed evil. The press is a kind of rough daily judgment of the world. By it hidden things of dishonesty are brought to the light. It is well for morals that some things which are done in secret should in this latter age be proclaimed upon the housetop. The deterrent influence of such newspaper publicity is no inconsiderable moral force. On the whole, it is beneficial to let the truth out, to hold human life generally up to the broad light of day. One of the great laws of progress is that the man of sin must be revealed before he can be destroyed. This revelation of sin through the daily press may be accompanied by its evils, but in bringing evil to the light, the press works in conformity with a benign law of the revelation of evil in the moral progress of the world.

Nevertheless, it is well to remember that an utter loss of privacy in our modern world would cause much of the finest fruit of civilization to wither. Life held always and everywhere up to the fierce glare of publicity would soon become a parched and barren field. Only the coarsest and grossest natures can endure the blaze of perpetual noon. The shadows likewise are part of nature's economy

of the day, and the quiet night has also its uses. A certain amount of privacy is absolutely necessary for the preservation of the divine spirit that is in man. None feel this vital necessity more than public men, and they find it a necessity at times to fly from the footlights of their stage of action, to escape from "the madding crowd," to seek not health of body only but of soul, and to gain tone of spirit and renewal of inward strength, amid the quiet influences of the forests, in the loneliness of the lakes, among the mountain solitudes, or by the great ocean's shore. Some seclusion is a vital necessity in every true life. The Son of man with his few chosen disciples would go into a fisher's boat, and withdraw for a brief space from the multitude to the quietness of God's presence among the mountains on the other side of the sea. We owe, therefore, to ourselves a duty of privacy. It is to be planned for in the arrangements of our lives. Houses are to be built for it. The crowded tenement, as it destroys all privacy, is a deadly foe to morals and manners. Moral as well as sanitary law demands the destruction of tenements which are built to be swarmed with no regard to the demands of the family for necessary separation and seclusion. Moreover, limits should be set by public opinion, and, if necessary, by statute law, to the effrontery of the newsmongers, and the rudeness of the instantaneous photographer, in their invasion of the home and disregard for the personal belongings of men. No modest and beautiful girl should be left by the laws without protection from the gratuitous insult of a description of her appearance and her movements in the society of which she may form a happy and gracious part. The good offices of the law which protects the person of the individual from violence, might be invoked to protect the faces, the dress, the private lives of men and women from the assault of public curiosity through the newspapers.

Harmful violation of the sacred right of the individual to his private life and business has sometimes been charged upon democracy, as though democracy were necessarily hostile to those finer manners, and that happy culture, the

fruit and flower of which will not endure the glaring noon of publicity. But while the desecration of private life cannot be so hastily charged as a necessary evil of democracy, this is a danger which theories of social collectivism are inclined too much to overlook. Unless the idea and the worth of the individual, and his private life, be carefully guarded, "the new world's new fiend, publicity," may yet become an arch-enemy and betrayer of that imagined twentieth century civilization concerning which our social theorists are dreaming.

(8) The duty of self-preservation requires still further that the inward unity of one's being shall be maintained. Man is a spiritual unity, and is under obligation to himself as a moral end to keep his spiritual integrity. This duty of inward fidelity is an obligation of truth, and that in a twofold manner. The truth of a being to itself is fidelity to the type which it represents as well as to the particular form of its individuality. The person then who is true to himself will hold fast the typical idea of man's spiritual being while he is loyal to his own individuality. Truth to ourselves requires us, not only to develop our proper individuality, but also in our personal growth to realize the true idea of man.

To keep one's self in the integrity of one's nature demands consequently a self-preservation from all acts and habits that are inconsistent with the typical idea of man. This is the moral task enjoined by the Scriptures of keeping one's self from the evil one.[1] Hence the maintenance of inward spiritual integrity commands abstinence from the lusts of the flesh, and from all outward impurity. Holiness requires the preservation of angel or spirit from the touch of anything foreign to its nature by which it might be defiled. Corresponding in its kind to the divine holiness is purity of the human heart, and hence there is granted to it the blessing of the vision of God. Purity is first an inward virtue, the separation of the heart from all thought of uncleanness, and then it is the outward habit and chastity of the life. From pureness of soul springs

[1] Matt. vi. 13; John xvii. 15.

clearness of life. The deep inward thoroughness of Jesus' ethics appears in his insistence upon the right heart.[1] His righteousness was inward wholeness of heart. All intemperance and lust are to be overcome at the sources of the conduct, in the thoughts of the heart. The sensual vices are not bodily excesses merely, nor are they worthy of condemnation only as wrongs done to the lives of others, incalculable as the evil of their social consequences may be; they are suicidal acts of the person against himself; they are immediately and directly acts of violence against one's own personal integrity and honor. Every lust of the flesh, so far as a man yields to it, is an attempt at suicide of the soul. Lust would kill the soul. The first obligation of nature to self-preservation requires with an imperative necessity that the embodied soul should save itself from all self-destructive vices, and that the spiritual integrity should be guarded and kept in purity of heart, chastity of body, self-control in the satisfaction of appetite, and temperance in the pleasures of the senses.

(9) This duty of preserving the spiritual integrity of our being will furnish also a principle of discrimination amid many of the perplexities which arise from the sensible side of our lives.

On the one hand, a healthful spiritual instinct will recognize as a good, and seek to conserve in the harmony of true life, the whole side of our existence towards nature. It will not only reject as opposed to the integrity of our being an excessive and self-mutilating asceticism, but it will also rebel against any moral depreciation of the ministry of external nature to the delight of the eye or enjoyment of the heart. It will suspect something false in a spiritual-mindedness that is cherished at the cost of anything external which God has pronounced to be good.[2] Genuine spirituality cannot be unnatural, for nature exists for the spirit of man, as it is an expression of the Spirit of God. Moreover, embodiment (as we have already remarked) is itself an end of the creation, — not indeed an absolute good, but an end of creative wisdom in compari-

[1] Matt. v. 8; xii. 34, 35; xv. 18–19.

[2] Gen. i. 31.

son with all below it, as it is a means for the spirit of man above it. The human body, or more exactly, the spirit in its bodily endowment, has certain rights of existence, to ignore which would be to despise one of the good ends which already have been reached in the evolution of life.

While thus the natural instinct of life, in its unity of body and soul, reacts against any denial of its legitimate activity on the sensible and pleasurable side, the same instinct of spiritual unity will discover also the limits to be set to sensible indulgence. The obligation of preserving our whole being in its integrity, contains within itself the limitations of the moral exercise of any particular power or faculty. For the use of any single organ is for the life of the whole. Each faculty and sense has its right and its limitation in the unity or wholesomeness of the entire being. So far as its exercise or indulgence may be seen to minister to the good of the whole, so far as it does no harm to the true self in its entirety, its activity is legitimate and does not go beyond due bounds. Self-control is the subordination of each and every power and nerve to the good of the whole organism. Practical wisdom in regard to all self-gratifications, whether these are bodily or mental, or consist even in the affections of the heart or the flights of the spiritual imagination, will be found in the acquisition of a fine spiritual tact, by means of which the truth and worth of the whole life will be made to characterize each single act, — the ministry of all the members to one another will be preserved, and through all the harmony of the ideal ends and aims of our being will be kept. But this spiritual tact in the use of the world and the enjoyment of life is a virtue to be acquired only through much self-discipline, and it is to be kept healthful and true only by daily watchfulness and prayer. No less high or less difficult a virtue, however, is contemplated in the ethics of Jesus for his disciples, for his prayer for them was, not that they should be taken from the world. but that God should keep them from the evil. A heart blending with the outward world, yet single

in its spiritual simplicity, and perfect before the Lord, would alone fulfil nature's first obligation of full and undiminished existence; and this is likewise the Christian ideal of a life in the world but not of it, kept from the evil, abounding in itself and rich toward God.[1]

(10) The other truth of integrity, which was indicated, needs further explication; viz. the proper individuality is to be kept in each moral life.

This obligation requires the individual to gain a definite acquaintance with his natural inheritance and temperament, to understand his personal endowment as well as the limitations of his powers. The trend likewise of the circumstances which may mark the providential order of a life, is not to be overlooked. The individuality is to be preserved in the chosen calling. The vocation, so far as it may be a matter of choice, should fit the man, so that in his work the man may naturally, and without too violent strain, keep the truth of his own particular personality. To this extent a duty, as well as pleasure, is to be found in following one's bent. By so doing we may remain ethically most true to ourselves. There is no virtue in wasting soul on impossible tasks. It is not valorous to attempt what nature never intended us to do. The primal law of nature, as well as the ethics of providence in human life, gives to every man his work. Self-sacrifice is never ethical, if it be a wilful spending of soul to no purpose.

The calling in life is of such vital importance to the truest and fullest self-preservation, that it should not be hastily chosen, nor carelessly left to the determination of circumstances. For the same reasons freedom in childhood should be allowed for the growth of individuality. Education, it is true, may require that some compression be put upon excessive natural tendencies; but educative restraints should never be carried so far as to become a constraint of nature against its own vitalities. Time should be left for the individuality to make itself felt; some natures come more slowly than others to self-asser-

[1] John x. 10; xvii. 15: Luke xii. 21.

tion. Moreover, the vocation to be chosen should never be regarded as a mere matter of external prosperity, solely as a convenient or profitable business. Every calling to which a man gives himself, by the very fact that his soul goes into it, becomes a sacred calling. It is the means of life to a soul, as well as to the body. In his business a man is to gain and to keep himself. The choice of a calling, therefore, so far as one is permitted to choose, should be itself a finding of one's life. Yet often in this respect providence compels an outward losing of one's life in the necessary calling that there may be gained a richer spiritual finding of it.

(11) The important duties which moralists include under the obligation of self-control, constitute a part of this general obligation of the preservation of one's personal integrity, for any lack of self-control is a loss of inward unity and calm. Self-preservation is self-possession in one's inward wholeness, and in the harmonious working of all the powers of one's nature.

The beginnings of this essential mastery of self are to be gained from early childhood in little things, or the manhood may easily fall to pieces under the blow of some great temptation. The psychology of crime reveals often a failure in early life to gain self-control in minor things, and the future integrity is endangered in any home which fails to stimulate and discipline the boy or girl to decided yet happy self-mastery against habits of ease and sloth and self-indulgence in moods and feelings.

(12) It remains to be added that our human duty of preserving our spiritual integrity is to be fulfilled against a tendency of evil, and under the liability of death in sin.

Life's primal law of single-heartedness is moral law for men who are born to divided natures. We inherit spiritual contradictions, as well as bodily imperfections, from our ancestors. We are born to inevitable moral strife. It has been said that the most characteristic sign which this earth has to show to heaven, is a scaffold on the morning of a day of execution. Certainly the knowledge of sin would

seem to be the distinctive mark of human history. The cry of the soul under the burden of its sense of sin is the most piercing cry of the soul, to be heard farthest skywards, reaching beyond other human accents into the depths of the pure heavens. Above and beyond the confused voices of humanity, and the babel of human speech, the one sound into which in the far distance all earthly sounds might be conceived to be resolved, in which all are met and carried on and on, is this cry of the lost soul, this prayer of sinful man on the earth for deliverance and peace. Could each inhabited world be known by its own voice, — the sound in which all voices of its life are combined, — and could far-off intelligences listen also to the characteristic note of this earth which ascends to heaven, that one voice, significant of our human estrangement from heaven, distinct perhaps from the voices of all other worlds in space, would be this cry, as of a lost soul, for deliverance from sin, — the piercing cry wrung from the depths of man's experience of evil,— "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?"[1] Christian ethics receives from heaven an answer to this cry of the earth, a gospel of the new righteousness. The ethics of Christianity is the ethics of a restored integrity of manhood. It insists that a man needs to be thoroughly cured of himself in order that he may enter into eternal life. It teaches the moral necessity of a crucifixion of self, and the rising of a new manhood from the death of sin. "For whosoever would save his life shall lose it,"[2] was the Master's profound saying, by which he disclosed the one moral method of salvation through death unto life. The ethical truth and fresh vitality of the new Christian self-consciousness is expressed in these words from an apostle's experience of spiritual and moral renewal: "Yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me."[3]

We are not now recurring merely to a doctrine of grace, and still less are we contemplating a religious experience of conversion as the means of happiness in some future world; on the contrary, we are reaching down to the

[1] Rom. vii. 24. [2] Matt. xvi. 25. [3] Gal. ii. 20.

fundamental ethical conditions for a life now of personal integrity. We are observing that the obligation of self-respect requires an ethical struggle and a spiritual renewal similar to that inward regeneration which is described in the New Testament as the new birth of the Spirit. The gospel in its essential requirements of repentance, self-crucifixion, dying unto the world, the loss of life and finding life again, the regeneration of the inward personality through the Holy Ghost, is not merely religious teaching, or an offering of future life to faith; it is ethical teaching, discovering the present deepest moral need of human nature.

2. Another class of primary duties toward self as a moral end may be gathered under the general obligation of self-development.

Besides preserving our personality in its integrity, we are to appropriate to ourselves in our development whatever materials of growth we can assimilate to our true selves. This duty is the continuation of the primary obligation which we have just considered. For life can maintain itself only through growth. The laws of biology yield here the analogies of ethical life, and the methods of biological study may be happily applied to the determination of the conditions and laws of moral growth.

Mr. Drummond has followed biological analogies with much moral suggestiveness in his *Natural Law in the Spiritual World.* We should be careful however to avoid the error into which Mr. Drummond has fallen of identifying natural and spiritual law, which is as fallacious as would be an identification of chemical and astronomical methods of procedure. There is analogy but not identity between different processes of nature, — analogy, because the universe is made rationally and pervaded throughout with reason. But if identity be assumed, as Mr. Drummond seems to assume it, strict logic would drive his reasoning into the hardest possible spiritual mechanics.

The use of such analogies is justified by the psychological truth that the living soul is an organic force, and is not to be conceived of as a ready-made apparatus of thoughts and volitions. It does not come into the world written over with innate ideas, and stored with the truths of reason. It inherits, indeed, aptitudes and facilities, but the external

world, and the whole heaven of truths, are to be discovered afresh by it in the outgoing of its life from its own luminous centre of intelligence. The soul cannot indeed be said to be finished when it is created. It is a germinal being. It is a living point where nature has been touched by the finger of God, and kindled into the flame of pure intelligence. The self of which the infant becomes aware, is a very rudimentary self; and an embryology of soul, as well as of body, is conceivable, although it lies beneath the positive knowledge of experience. So far as our capability of being souls is concerned, we come with a spiritual nature from the Father of spirits; but there is also a sense in which every man makes his own soul, is a worker together with God in enlarging, forming, and characterizing his own soul. A human life is not simply a bringing out of preexistent soul; it is winning soul. There is no metaphysical reason why we should not thus apply biological conceptions and laws to the rise and growth of human souls. Ethics is intensified by such vital conceptions of psychology. When we assume thus the promise and potency of soul, and the unity of spiritual being in every human child, the problem of education will become the vital problem of the development in each case of the personal power which is specialized in the individual. True education will then be kept from falling into a mechanical course of mental addition and external forcing, and it will become an endeavor, intelligently and persistently pursued, to aid the individual nature in finding and assimilating the best materials for its growth. The mechanical method of addition, and the spiritual method of appropriation, are to be distinguished throughout the whole course of education, — the one to be avoided, the other to be studied and helped.

Accordingly the problem of education is primarily for every man a matter of self-education; others may bring means, and guide us in the choice of material for the upbuilding of character and the strengthening of any talent; but education, strictly speaking, is the development of personality through the inward assimilation of the materials of growth which life brings within one's reach; and that

each must do for himself; the vital thing in education is always the self-education. A clear discernment of this vital method of true education will indicate where a remedy is to be sought for the evil which seems sometimes to exist of over-education. Many persons, it is said, seem to be educated beyond their callings, or their possibilities of life, and such over-education produces unfortunate social consequences; it embitters life to many instead of enriching it. The evil, however, which is thus deplored, is not over-education, but an untrue education, — an education, that is, of men and women in the mass, and not as individuals — their development after some common pattern, and not according to individuality, — a training which does not follow the lines indicated by personal talents and needs. A first educational necessity for a civilized people is a system of public schools; yet mass education, popular education in the lump, may result in some economic evils, while true individual education will tend towards social salvation. But let us distinguish more carefully the true from the false at this important practical point.

In order to come to a good understanding of this matter, we raise at the outset the question whether all knowledge is desirable, or is something worth seeking for by all men.[1] The Grecian ethics deemed knowledge to be the chief end of the chosen few. Anaxagoras is said to have answered the question why one should wish to be born in this manner: "For the sake of contemplating the heavens, and the order which obtains throughout the whole world." This has rightly been said to be the answer fundamentally of the whole Greek moral philosophy. But Malebranche reflected a certain distrust of science which has occasionally shadowed modern philosophy, when he asked the astronomers, "What does it signify to us whether the zone around Saturn is a ring or a great cluster of planets?" What does it signify to us? is the practical question which the necessity of bread-winning may raise concerning a great deal of popular education. The worth of knowledge to men is to be determined by its relation to two functions of man's

[1] Paulsen is of the opinion that it is not. — *System der Ethik,* s. 426.

intelligence, — his power of mental insight into the nature of things, together with the spiritual satisfaction of it; and, further, his power of making things serve his uses. All knowledge, it may be said, which is answerable to these functions or ends of intelligence, is desirable; it is worth seeking by any man. Theoretically at least any knowledge which is worth knowing by any mind is worthy of all men's search. Education in its general idea must proceed from this broad premise that all knowledge is for all men. Science is the common desirable property of intelligence. It is ethically good to give to every man information in general, for all science is worth knowing, and may likewise become useful when we least expect it. Not only our universities and schools of sciences and arts, but our public school systems rest on the same broad foundation of the utility of knowledge. To begin with an educational principle less universal, and to hold theoretically that an educational distinction should be made from the beginning between different classes; that the ways of all the sciences should not be kept open to all; that some knowledge must be reserved as a state secret, or as an esoteric science, or a religious mystery for the select few; would be to turn backwards the whole course of civilization and to wish to divide the new world of the twentieth century by the ancient limitations of the Greeks and the barbarians. A revived Hellenism, with its doctrine of an elect remnant, hardly ventures so far as to deny the fundamental postulate of popular education; and the gospel in its whole spirit is so directly aimed at the salvation of men in the mass that Christian ethics certainly cannot consent in the name of the Son of man to any narrow doctrine of educational election. Truth is for man. All truth is for all men. The whole heaven is for every man's eye. Universality in the offer of the good is essential principle of the Christian Ideal.

But because the foundation should be exceeding broad, it does not follow that the individual life should not build itself up, and be encouraged to attain its highest excellence on its own special lines. The best possible specialization

of education is now the practical problem of our whole system of education.[1]

The economical trouble, we suspect, in this matter does not consist in over-education, for no man can be too much educated, if he has been rightly educated. Properly individualized education is not given simply by introducing the mind to the greatest possible amount of information, nor is it necessarily a training of the man for some technical work or in a special science or profession; true education — the education of a man in deed and in truth — is his development, according to the truth of his own personality, for the action which lies within the range of his capacities. In other words, and to return to our original statement, he is the truly educated man who has learned to make the most of the materials of personal development within his reach. Education without adaptation to the receptive energy of the pupil is simply over-cramming, by which the natural powers may be weakened rather than invigorated, unfitted rather than trained for the struggle of existence. A man is not overweighted, however, by the material which he has vitally assimilated and converted into a store of working energy. Unassimilated learning one may carry as so much vanity to be displayed, or it may prove a burden in the race of life. So Goethe made Faust exclaim, when he groaned under the burden of the science of the schools,

"Was man nicht nutzt, ist eine schwere Last."

To a recognition of this claim of individuality in education, and to an increasing perception of the social danger of mere mass education without intelligent adaptation to individual powers and needs, we owe the adoption of elective courses in our universities, and the introduction of industrial training in our common schools.

On the other hand, we cannot fail to observe that the division of labor, and the growing differentiation of modern

[1] Paulsen complains of the over-education of an increasing mass of brains among the German youth who are being educated away from the means of livelihood. He suggests, however, that the trouble may lie in the nature of the education rather than in the amount of it (*Opus cit.* s. 429). The remark has often been cited which the Duke of Wellington made to a young man who applied to him for an office: "Sir, you have received too much education for your brains"; it illustrates an evil in our education of men by the mass which practical men often have observed.

life, bring with them perils of their own. An extreme specialization of education, however great may be its economic value or its scientific necessity, brings with it no little danger of loss to liberal education. And there is also a certain moral risk in it. For the continuous use of one set of faculties, and disuse of others, tends to atrophy of the neglected powers. The autobiographical recollections of Darwin suggest the possibility of such atrophy of common elements of human nature in the pursuit of studies which in themselves may be of a high order of worth and of much value to mankind.[1] It is not an uncommon or unkindly criticism to regard the specialist as one who, while doing good service in his way, has withdrawn himself to his own hurt from the common vitalities and universal joy of human life. Professional life may narrow, even while it sharpens, a man's wits. A certain broad humanness, a certain largeness of interest and generousness of human sympathy, goes with the true idea of a well-educated man; but specialism and professionalism are becoming so exacting that one who gives himself with all his strength to his particular calling is apt almost unconsciously to withdraw from active and sympathetic knowledge of men, and even to lose certain elements of happy and healthful faith which the individual can keep only as he shares in the common experiences of men. The special student is in danger of losing communion with those larger and higher truths which do not wait for us at the end of long and narrow ways of investigation, but which, like the kingdom of heaven, are nigh to every one of us, and which we may find as the rewards of true and generous sympathies with the lives of men, and healthful contacts with the broad, sunny realities of nature around us. A man who lives solely in the light of his specialty, may be mistaken in his knowledge, and may lose sight of the whole heavens that are open to the eyes of other men's understanding, as a person who stands directly under an electric light will perceive nothing but deepened darkness beyond its intense yet limited illumination, although the sky may be bright with all the stars.

[1] *Life and Letters,* vol. i. p. 81.

A corrective for this modern peril of the specialization of knowledge and life, is to be found partly in a general elementary education before the student takes up, or is permitted in his university course to choose, those elective studies which may fit him for his future career. The danger also is to be guarded against by forming the habit, even in the most busy professional life, of throwing one's self, if only for brief moments, yet frequently, into the currents of the general human life. Isolation from men, insulation from life, should be recognized as a peculiar moral peril of the educated mind. The temptation to lose one's soul in absorbing professional study is a real danger, although it is more subtle than the temptation to lose one's soul in the world. A man may give his life in exchange for his science, his art, his single treasure of knowledge, and even for his theology. True life cannot maintain itself long apart from the universal human life, — the single branch, bearing its single cluster, must abide in the vine; otherwise the professional mind will in time become dry as a dead branch.

In the Christian life this peril to whole-heartedness, which threatens us from the increasing specialization of men's studies and pursuits, is in principle overcome. For Christian faith is personal attachment to the Son of man; and in the Christ of our faith and our following there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, but in him humanity lives and is to be loved. The principle not of human brotherhood only, but of the solidarity of human interests is found in Christ. Humanity, as it is presented in Christ's person, and through his life of universal sympathies, is no longer an empty and vague abstraction of philosophy; it is no mere concept of human nature without contents and manifoldness of interests. The idea of humanity, of the oneness of all, and the life of all in each, has been made real and living in Christ; to follow him is to come into touch with whatever belongs to man, and to find one's life in the full current of human life, out upon God's broad purposes for men.[1]

[1] "The Christian principle is the representative of the true humanity. In Christ is the true universality (*Allgemeinheit*) manifested, the true humanity and yet in personal form." — DORNER, *System der Christ. Sittenlehre.* s. 443.

Consequently, while the Christian obligation of self-education enforces the duty of pursuing that course of training and achievement which is marked out for one by his own individuality, and made possible by the conditions and circumstances of his life, at the same time it insists that the special life-work is to be followed in whole-souled oneness with Christ, and kept in the communion of the Holy Ghost. The Christianizing of the special education both in the spirit and the use of it, will save it from false exclusiveness, and render it a part of the universal service and joy of men.

Besides these general obligations of self-education, the ethics of the New Testament lay special emphasis on the cultivation of Christian habits of thought and feeling. Our emotions are not to be left to run wild; every thought is to be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.[1]

The Christian education of the feelings is to be accomplished both directly and indirectly, by immediate subjection of them to the Christian will of life, and through the reflex action of Christian thought upon the emotions. Often the latter method of the Christian control of feeling is efficacious when the direct action of the will upon the mood seems to fail. By putting the mind into an open and receptive relation to truth, the whole mental atmosphere may be changed, and the feelings of themselves will reflect instantly the light of God that has thus been let into the soul. Christian wisdom in the cultivation of a happy, trustful temperament will be shown often as much in the use of the indirect means of the discipline of the feelings, as by a direct struggle of the will with them and labored conquest of them. We can do many gracious things with our temperaments by indirect methods of culture, which we cannot accomplish by immediate volitions.

An important part of the education of the life of faith will consist also in the cultivation of the power of spiritual imagination. For the gospel is a gift to the imagination as well as to the understanding. Often the practical

[1] 2 Cor. x. 5.

difficulty of believing lies more in the inability of the imagination to conceive the reality of things spiritual and eternal than in the refusal of the reason to render assent to the evidences of their truth. And any religious faith without spring and uplift of spiritual imagination in it, will tend to become a too literal and joyless conscientiousness, as though religion were only a straight path of obedience, and not also a boundless prospect and delight beyond the heart of man to conceive.

This valuable talent of spiritual imagination may be cultivated in those ways by which in general we train the mind to see as clear realities things distant and invisible; and also more specifically, as the faculty of religious imagination, it may be enhanced by the habit of seeking in nature for the suggestions of higher analogies and of discerning in outward affairs the deeper spiritual laws of life which events follow and illustrate. Thus nature was one open parable to the Christ, and human life a daily teaching of the Father's will.

The spiritual imagination should be kept within the bounds always of an intelligent and reverent reason; but it has its value as a help to faith even in speculative thought; and so long as we hold our conceptions of the world to come, and the life of completions beyond, in obedience to the Spirit of Christ, they not only may be harmless exercises of imagination within the religious sphere, but they may be positive aids to one walking by faith through many a hard pass and beneath the deep shadows. He who carries a vision of heaven "in his own clear breast," although his imagination be dimmest reflection of the glorious reality, will go with cheerful heart even through the darkest valley.

To these primary duties of self-preservation and self-development another should be added, which is involved indeed in them, but which adds also a distinct element to them.

3. A third duty towards self as a moral end is the obligation of realizing in the individual life as much as is possible of the highest good.

Those particular goods which are to be attained in the final and perfect well-being of man, are rightly the objects of our personal desire, endeavor, and, so far as practicable, of our present possession. The limits of this duty of possessing one's self with such objects, are given in the statement of the principle itself by which they may be made ours. For these are not goods which can be possessed in selfish isolation; we must share them in order to have them. They are the human goods in which we are to desire to have our personal part. As human possessions they cannot be appropriated by us in any ways which would dehumanize them, take them out of their place in the sum total of human welfare, or render them prejudicial to others. Thus the right of private property has its limits in the public necessity. An attempt to gain as private property and to monopolize any of those elements, such as air and sunlight, which are necessary in some measure to any man, would be Satanic greed. But any selfishness of possession reacts upon the power of enjoyment, and belittles the man who succumbs to it. The good which we would tear entirely from its human connections and carry off for our exclusive possession, will surely become evil to us. The miser and his wretchedness afford the standing illustration of the folly of the attempt to possess any wealth, even of so material a kind as money, without relation to the general circulation of it in the prosperity of the community. Still more miserable would miserliness be in the possession of the finer and more precious treasures of life. And the higher the nature of the good to be received, the more morally necessary becomes this principle of possession as a participation of the individual in the human joy of existence. The very best things which we know must be shared with others, or we cannot have them at all. The richest blessings grow in clusters. There are some treasures, and these most to be desired, which no individual can gain for himself alone, which God could not bestow upon a single and solitary spirit; they are the free gifts of heaven to us in the family life and in the friendships of our human hearts.

The endeavor thus to possess ourselves of the greatest possible amount of good, should not be regarded simply as something morally permissible to us, a privilege only of our powers; it is also a duty, — an effort which every man to the extent of his ability ought to make. It is the obligation of bringing to realization in our character, circumstances, and lives, as much as possible of human good. Only thus, through personal attainments of it, can the ideal of human welfare be finally secured. Every individual therefore who in his own life brings some part of the ideal happiness and supreme good of mankind to realization, works directly for the highest end, and hastens by his very possession of some true thing the coming of the kingdom of heaven. Personal well-being becomes thus an obligation of the individual under the general law of the progressive realization of the *summum bonum* of humanity. Happiness, other things being equal, is a personal obligation. The whole emptiness of our humanity cannot be filled with God's blessing unless the individual cups shall become full to overflowing. Therefore hold up your cup of life, and let God fill it.

The Christian morality of happiness consists in making it thus a part of life's whole dutifulness. We are to ethicize our enjoyment; that is, we are to seek personal happiness not selfishly for its own momentary sake merely, but unselfishly as our participation in, and our contribution to, the universal joy of life, which is good. The love of happiness, when so conceived, will be enlarging and ennobling to the heart, like the joy of the Christ.[1]

This general principle of the moral possession of good, will be found practically helpful as we seek to find our way in the often doubtful region between those pursuits which are legitimate, and others which may prove to be harmful; or as we become at times perplexed concerning the proper measures to be observed in the possession of things which in some degree may be regarded without question as legitimate objects of our desire and enjoyment. Take, for instance, the often mooted question of the morality of ambi-

[1] John xv. 11.

tion. Ambition is a natural spring of action. A youth without ambition makes a man without worth. But ambition is also a natural impulse which lends itself readily to evil, and by which the world has been cursed. No private right, no public security, no interest of humanity has been safe from the onset and the violence of human ambition. It has climbed the steps of the altar, and seized even the sign of the Cross for its unhallowed conquests. Though ambition brings order out of a chaotic world, it will proceed to reign over it in the pride of a Cæsar. A world in arms must at length rise up against, and banish to St. Helena, the one imperial will, whose awful ambition would make all things subject to it. Principle of Satanic might and curse though ambition may become, it may also be conceived to be impulse of angelic ministry, and strength of all-serving love. It is the outbreak of this principle from its moral bounds, and its rebellion against its true uses, that causes it to become a terribly destructive energy. It is not ambition, but loveless ambition, that lays waste and destroys. The selfish love of excelling is the evil spirit of ambition. But there is lawful ambition in the endeavor to make the most of self in the appropriation of the materials of our existence. This is the right endeavor to make the five talents gain other five talents. It is the moral will to realize any and every good within possible reach of our effort, or touch of our growth. It is an ambition for the largest and highest life that can be gained by our individuality amid the universal good, and in harmony with all the laws of life. It is an invigorating sense of our personal obligation to fill up all the room for our personal expansion which we may occupy without crowding others out of their rightful space for existence and growth. It is also an aspiration of spirit, the eager desire to grow upwards as well as expansively, to reach in our best life as far toward heaven as we can. And there is no limit to the right of growth in that direction. There is always room for growth skywards. Ambition transfigured into aspiration never interferes with the free grace and sunshine belonging to others, as it lifts character, and all its blossoming of virtue,

upward into the Light which is for every man, coming into the world. Thus, in accordance with the whole healthful tone of the ethics of the New Testament, the brave, large-hearted apostle describes himself as pressing on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.[1] To that noble, heavenward ambition of his spirit the only conceivable goal was the attainment of a perfect righteousness. Sinlessness, and the power of doing everything that is to be done perfectly, is the aim and end of the Christian ambition. "Even so run," the apostle exhorts, "that ye may attain."[2] "Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness,"[3]— thus every Christian man may cherish a celestial ambition for the crown of the true life. And in such spiritual ambition there need lurk no other-world selfishness. That which is immoral in the thirst for happiness either here or hereafter, is the desire of securing the promise without reference to character; if the righteousness of the kingdom of heaven is first sought, a natural pleasure may be morally felt in all the things which are added to righteousness as its legitimate rewards. The ethical desire of happiness is the desire not to be *made* happy, but to *become* happy, which is a very different thing, and which implies a virtuous process of life. The delight which accompanies and follows moral endeavor is of a different quality from the pleasure which is looked for as an external gift to be tossed to us by passing circumstances; the one is ethical happiness, the other, at best, is mere animal enjoyment.

This duty of moral appropriation and enjoyment of good, cannot indeed be fully determined without reference to the obligations of social ethics, which remain for us to consider; but the self-regarding obligation now advanced is one determinative principle in all questions of conscience concerning the possession and pleasurable use of things.

For instance, we often find ourselves asking, Is it right, or how far is it right, that one should surround himself with comforts and conveniences, with many articles of adornment and works of art, especially since so much unre-

[1] Phil. iii. 14. [2] 1 Cor. ix. 24. [3] 2 Tim. iv. 8.

lieved suffering exists in the world? How far is it Christian to make one's own house spacious beyond the necessities of existence, and to fill it with furnishings that will give pleasure to those under its roof? What are the Christian ethics of the expenditure of money for personal edification, enjoyment, and recreation?

The part of the answer which the duty of an individual to himself furnishes is not to be taken indeed for the whole answer to such questions; but, so far as it goes, it is a true answer. The word self-regard is one of the true words to be summed up in the resultant moral obligation of the life. And the answer to be deduced from our principle is simple and plain. The worth to me of these various objects is to be determined by their value in the terms of the general moral good, or supreme welfare of man. Their value is to be estimated on the scale of goods which are constitutive of the true ideal of life. Whatever is worthless in that comparison should have no place in my desires and should be cast out of my house. Whatever has any rank or standing as judged by the true ends of human life, whatever may be ethically admissible as a part of the complete moral good of humanity, or as a means for its realization, should have its proper place in my desire of life, and may be brought into my house. Take a picture for instance. That has value as judged by the scale of general moral worths. Beauty is in itself an end of life. Beauty is itself an element of universal joy. That which is beautiful belongs essentially to a broad and loving conception of the true human good; and any presentation of the beautiful may be a means, therefore, of drawing my desires out towards ideal ends of being. Therefore I may leave space for the picture on the bare wall. Beauty is one of the first and the last missionaries of God's love to the world. It is new every morning, and fresh every evening. The beautiful is expression and means of the good.

In one of our mission schools among the worst classes of a city, the promise of a flower-pot with a real flower in it proved one of the most eagerly sought rewards of attendance; and the sending of a flower in the name of Christ, more even than the offer of bread, opened to the Christian teacher homes where little children had been born to want and were educated to sin.

Christianity consecrates the beautiful with its spirit of purity and joy; and Christian ethics will exclude the spuriousness of all false art. Deceptive mural decoration does not become the walls of a Christian church; nor should any corrupt coloring, or form suggestive of evil, be tolerated in a Christian home. While rejecting the false and the pretentious, Christian ethics will leave space and play in all the furnishings and adornment of life for the true line of beauty, the pure color, the charm of music, and the fragrance of the flowers. This Christian right of the individual to the possession of a cheerful fireside, and the enrichment of the home, as well as to the necessities of a dwelling-place, is justified and secured in the obligation of the individual conscience to make some portion of man's ideal happiness concrete and real in the personal possession and joy of existence. The several particular goods which form the contents of the ideal good, and which are comprehended in the fulness of the eternal life, are our individual obligations, our duties to ourselves, so far as they are now practicable, and are to be realized on the lines of our individual energies within the bounds of the immediate claims of others. This principle of the Christian ownership of all things[1] contains within itself the limitation already noticed, which should in no case be overlooked: Christian possession is also a sharing, it is a communion in the Holy Ghost. Any enjoyment of our homes, or possession of our property, would be evil, the tendency of which should show itself to be separative and divisive; to set up anything, however good in itself, as a household god for our own exclusive blessing, would not be to keep that good in a large Christian ownership of things.

The principle of the Christian possession of things was finely stated by Clement of Alexandria in his instruction to the Christians of the second century: "For, in fine, in food, and clothes, and vessels, and everything else belonging to the house, I say comprehensively, that one must follow the institutions of the Christian man, as is serviceable and suitable to one's person, age, pursuits, time of life. For it becomes those that are servants of one God, that their possessions and furniture should exhibit the tokens of one beautiful life." — *Pæd.* ii. c. 3.

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.

CHAPTER III

DUTIES TOWARDS OTHERS AS MORAL ENDS

THE supreme social commandment of Christianity is the love of one's neighbor as one's self.[1] In the gospels the social commandment follows immediately the first commandment of love to God. It is the application toward men of the same principle of love which is the human obligation required toward God by the first commandment. In the ethics of the New Testament both obligations of love toward God and man are derived directly from a transcendental principle, and secured in an eternal sanction; for beneath all the ethical requirements of Jesus lay his fundamental religious faith that "One there is who is good."[2] The multitudes and the disciples are to be brethren because One is their teacher, and there is one Father in heaven.[3] The Christian principle of the moral law in the whole range of its commandments, as well as in its religious sanction, is comprehended in the simple, profound word of the beloved disciple, "We love, because he first loved us."[4]

In the gospels the Christian commandment of love is given in still another form (besides the summary of the law which was made for the Jewish ruler) in this saying of Jesus to his disciples: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you.[5] In this latter form the social commandment includes the Christian law of sacrifice: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."[6] The other and earlier annunciation by Jesus of the law of love as the fulfilment of the law and the prophets, may be said to be more

[1] Matt. xxii. 39; Mark xii. 31.
[2] Matt. xix. 17.
[3] Matt. xxiii. 8, 9.
[4] 1 John iv. 9.
[5] John xv. 12.
[6] John xv. 13.

Jewish in its form — it is a spiritual summary of the Old Testament, rather than an express declaration of the new commandment of the kingdom of Christ. The serving one another, which Jesus more explicitly taught his disciples, would show love like his own,[1] and his love had in it the willingness of sacrifice; the Christian love is a sacrificial love. How then are the two principles of self-love and self-denial to be held together in the same ethics? Is the one exclusive of the other?

If, as is sometimes said, we are to love others more than ourselves, the obligation of such sacrificial passion might seem to be destructive of all self-regard. If the law of self-denial, when truly conceived, involves willingness not only to give up temporary advantage, or this present life, for a friend, but also to give up self in the sense of an absolute surrender of being for another's salvation, then all that we have said of the duty of self-preservation would go for naught. But the dogma (which has occasionally appeared in theology) of willingness to be accursed for the salvation of another, has no basis in nature, and none in Scripture beyond an exaggeration of a fervent rhetorical ejaculation of St. Paul.[2] It has no support in the law of self-sacrifice which Christ followed to the cross. For he did not give up his real and eternal selfhood for the world. He kept himself in perfect integrity beneath God's eye.

The ultimate unit of moral worth in Christian ethics is the Christian personality, or the redeemed Christian self. Christ in his sinless nature is the example of absolute personal worth, which can be in no sense sacrificed. To love another more than one's true self would be to love immorally, for it would be a confusion of moral values. God cannot be morally conceived as loving the created universe more than He regards His own eternal nature of love. Otherwise He would deny the first element which we have observed in love's sacred trinity — its eternal worthiness to be loved. The commandment of self-denial, then, which is contained in the Christian law of love, is not to be con-

[1] Matt. xx. 26–28; John xv. 8–10.
[2] Rom. ix. 3; cf. 2 Tim. iv. 8.

strued as a requirement of absolute self-surrender, or an immoral disregard for self. There are some things which the most devoted soul cannot give up for another. Yet the law of self-sacrifice may require the giving up for another of all but this inward life and honor of a soul. We ought so to love one another as Christ has loved us, who gave his life for us, while he kept his soul righteous and holy, and full of joy, before his Father and ours. In all true self-sacrifice the word of Christ is sure to find eternal fulfilment: "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."[1] In the Christian spirit of self-denial the cross is not chosen for its own sake, but that love, by the way of the cross, may finish its work. Sacrifice is not the good to be desired, but often the Christlike means of good. The cross of Christ was a cross *to* the Christ. It was suffering to be endured by him for the joy set before Him.[2] We cannot suppose that God ever takes pleasure in self-denial as denial, in sacrifice as suffering. The necessity for it is moral, teleological, for further and happier ends. The only moral reason by which self-sacrifice is justified is the ethical aim of it, as it may minister to the larger good in which the self-denying soul also, in the final completions of life, shall itself have part and share. In other words, self-denial which exists simply for its own merit, as is the case in ascetic flagellations, is no moral sacrifice, and has no place in the morality of Christian love. True self-sacrifice is love's brave means to love's noblest ends.

The law of sacrifice, then, rightly conceived, is in harmony with the obligation of self-preservation. The latter is moral condition for the former, since self-denial, if it be Christian, involves an affirmation of the true and only worthy good of being for which, as the supreme end of life, other goods may be used as means.

With regard especially to social ethics the question has been raised, Are we still Christian?[3] It is objected on the one hand by some writers that the precepts of the New

[1] Matt. x. 39. [2] Heb. xii. 2.

[3] So Ziegler concludes his *Geschichte der Christlichen Ethik* with this question; and Paulsen treats Christian ethics as though modern Christianity were a very different thing from original Christianity.

Testament do not offer a complete social ethics for modern practice; and, on the other hand, it is sometimes urged by reformers that we should recast our whole social system according to the literal precepts of the New Testament.

It is said with truth in reply that the spirit is more than the letter; that many of the particular precepts of the New Testament, such as "Sell that thou hast," "Give to him that asketh of thee," and others like these, are what moralists call personal instances, and were never intended as principles of universal application; in short, that the gospel is a gift of God to men's common sense, and that interpreters should use their common sense in understanding and applying it.[1]

A larger answer, however, is needed to the question of social ethics, Are we still Christian? We take broad and clear ground when we stand on the truth that Christianity has its true continuity and development in the work of the Spirit among men. Christian social ethics are to be measured not entirely by the particular social precepts which we may find treasured up in the New Testament, but by the whole intention of the Spirit of Christ as it is to be gathered from Christian history. We are to learn who is our neighbor, and to know what love comprehends in its supreme commandment, not merely by referring to special maxims of the New Testament, but also by viewing our social obligation in the illumination of the whole Christian consciousness of the age.[2] The Christianity of Christ has made needed historic adaptations of its life to social conditions, and there is no reason for doubting that it may have further and still better developments of its grace to show in answer to more complex social and industrial wants. We have by no means come as yet to the end of the doctrine of social salvation in Christ Jesus.

In our further application of the law of love, therefore, to existing conditions of life, we are to take whatever social injunctions may be found in the New Testament as

[1] The objection that the gospel ignores the bold virtues we shall refer to farther on.

[2] At this point we avail ourselves of the results obtained in our discussion of the relation of the Scriptures and the Christian consciousness (pp. 76 seq.).

regulative norms or particular maxims of Christian authority; and we are also to interpret and harmonize them, to limit them or give them scope in action, in view of all that we may learn of the beneficent way of the Christ and the progressive methods of the Spirit in the processes of Christian history. Social ethics need to be spiritually discerned.

I. GENERAL SOCIAL DUTIES WHICH FOLLOW FROM THE SUPREME CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLE OF LOVE

1. Justice is one of the primal obligations which proceed from love.

The ideal man of the Old Testament is the just man who walks in integrity, and whose path is as the shining light. Abraham was chosen to be the father of a great and mighty nation, that they might do justice and judgment.[1] The righteous man of the earlier dispensation may appeal directly to the justice of God. To the great prophets Jehovah is not a tribal God, who is bound by his relation to his people to secure their prosperity without regard to their character, but the Holy One of Israel is the God of righteousness, who will not hesitate to cast off the seed of Israel for all that they have done.[2] An essential element of the true religion is to do justly.[3] The priestly code provided with painstaking commandments for the observance of justice between man and man; and human justice in the Hebrew commonwealth was secured in the memory of a great national deliverance which the Lord had wrought when he delivered his people from the yoke of bondage.[4] The book of Job is a drama through which the justice of the Almighty moves to its vindication. And the later psalmists, amid all adversities and disappointments of the national hope, declare Israel's unfailing faith that righteousness and judgment are the foundations of the throne of Jehovah.[5] This ancient Hebrew love of justice does not depart from the spirit of the New Testament; it is fulfilled in the Sermon on the Mount, and the apostles of

[1] Gen. xviii. 19. [2] Jer. xxxi. 37. [3] Micah vi. 8.
[4] Lev. xix. 35, 36. [5] Ps. lxxxix. 14.

Christ declared him to be the Holy and the Righteous One.[1]

We have already seen that love involves an affirmation of its own worth; and righteousness and justice are consequently essential to love as its inner truthfulness and integrity. It needs further to be observed that justice is not to be regarded simply as a forensic or notional conception; it is not merely a form of moral procedure between different persons, which may possibly be superseded by some more immediate, personal method of love; justice enters into the vital and essential energy of love, so that without it God's love would cease to be in his world the moral power of universal harmony and joy.

A tendency in modern literature to lose the quality of justness from love is noticeable in a recent book which has otherwise much ethical vitality, entitled "God in His World." This tendency of thought results from a genuinely ethical reaction against forensic theological conceptions of the divine justice, but it fails to distinguish between formal and essential justice. In escaping from the legal mechanism of forensic theologies and schemes of salvation, we need not fall into vague and nerveless conceptions of love. Christian thought may rest in a positive and real conception of justice as the eternal integrity of love in all God's relations to the creation.

Any lack of a true idea of justice threatens immediate mischief in all the spheres of social obligation; and the loss in our Christianity of a high and clear sense of what is just, would cause blindness to fall upon the eyes of charity, and put social reform to worse confusion. Benevolence without invigorating sense of justice is so much moral haziness, murky as it is warm, and debilitating to men. A strong sense of justice is often like a breath of the bracing wind from the northwest, dispelling the clouds and miasms, and giving the sunbeams a fair chance to make their quickening power felt. No life can grow to vigorous and wholesome fruitfulness except in an atmosphere cleared by justice for the full power and joy of love.

A prompt, strong sense of justice is indispensable to a thoroughly helpful manliness. No one can be a leader and inspirer of men who is not just, and who is not quick to

[1] Acts iii. 14.

feel injustice. What would the prophets of old have been — what would the pages of Isaiah or Amos be — if a flaming sense of justice had not burned in their words. Their voices have power to stir men still, like a trumpet, because their prophecies ring with the commandment of the pure and absolute justice of Jehovah.

When we analyze further the obligation of justice, it will be found to be of a twofold nature ; the duty of justice is to be pursued in two distinct directions.

(1) It is obligation of personal justness. The individual is to be himself a just man. He is to act fairly in his personal dealings with his fellowmen. The creed of personal justness is simple and thorough, — "Cast out first the beam out of thine own eye"; see things as they are; judge the truth; look upon life fairly without color of prejudice or distortion of passion. And the Christian promise, in which the creed of personal justness closes, is equally simple, — "If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are ye"; "the just shall live by faith"; the earth waits, and the heavens are reserved, for the victory and the reign of the just One.

The application of personal justice to daily life demands vigorous moral training and ceaseless vigilance. A watchful eye is necessary always in order that one may do no injustice among his fellowmen. To the clear sense of justice the least things as well as the greatest need to be brought. Justice is a daily obligation in many little things. The habit of justice, acquired by much self-discipline, and perhaps through many failures, will become a fine spiritual tact for right judgment and right doing; the quality of justness, tempered with mercy, is a sweet reasonableness of character, which is one of the most delightful domestic virtues, as well as a most serviceable quality of friendship and good citizenship. A profitable study of justice may be found in the example of the Son of man in the minor instances of his instantaneous rightness towards every man and woman whom he met. He was just to each and all with the immediate tact of true love. Such reasonableness and equity in all speech and act is the wisdom of love.

Common sins of our daily conversation disclose often some lack of this reasonable virtue of justness. Uncharitableness is, in its principle of evil, lovelessness of speech; but its want of love betrays also a frequent lack of a just sense of life. Charitableness may at times require silence when words of blame might be spoken which would not in themselves be unjust; — love is always something more than justice; but where a fine sense of what is just is wanting, love itself may easily be betrayed into uncharitable judgment. And similarly, if we run over the whole scale of virtues whose key-note and harmony is love, — such as generosity, compassion, helpfulness, tolerance, wisdom, and other familiar and grateful forms of human goodness, — we shall find that failure of a just sense of life — of a due proportion and symmetry among the many relations of men and things — will pervert the exercise of any of these virtues, will mar their tone, and even may throw the whole melody and movement of love into confusion. Justice is the harmonic scale to which love's music must be set.

(2) Justice involves also the moral obligation to make things right in the world. The whole duty of justice is not fulfilled in the life of the man who, though himself just, has no will to get justice done in the world. We are under social obligation, within the measure of our opportunity and power, to see that justice is done. The love of justice is an active as well as passive virtue. It is as a consuming fire in the righteousness of God; it may become a pure passion of a soul amid the wrongs of men. A strong, clear sense of justice will become an energy of will as well as a light of the understanding — a fire in the soul as well as truth in the intellect. The just man is not an indifferentist, or a cynic, or a pessimist, or a piece of pliable and limp good nature. The just One is the strong Son of God.

But precisely in this respect the ethics of Christianity have been questioned by moralists who have not understood the vital energy of Christian love sufficiently to learn how it carries in itself all authority of right and energy of justice. It is said that the Sermon on the Mount contains no blessing for resistance to wrong doing; Peter was bidden

to put up his sword; the Samaritan who had compassion on the man who had fallen among thieves is the good man of the Lord's parable; there is no word spoken in commendation of the strong man who should beat back the robbers or pursue the thieves. Benevolence, compassion, forgiveness, and sympathy fill with the fragrance of their grace the pages of the New Testament; but chivalry and the manly virtue of chivalric honor were the creations of the middle ages. Modern Christianity, it is alleged, in its insistence upon human rights, and its admiration of the bold virtues, is a departure from original Christianity.

These critics of Christian ethics might be more philosophical historians, if they would pause to reflect whether some vitalities which were latent in primitive Christianity may not have come to their hour of blossoming in chivalric virtue; whether our modern Christianity, in what is admitted to be its larger range of virtues, can be historically conceived as a breach of moral continuity with original Christianity, and whether the uniformity of historical law does not compel us to discover in it some true spiritual development of primitive Christianity. No moralist is warranted in assuming that Christian ethics are not Christian in their assertion of human rights, and their cultivation of a sense of justice, if he simply collects as his evidence a few scattered moral precepts from the original literature of Christianity, and does not inquire into the living truth at the heart of its growth. Yet without taking such profounder account of the spiritual development of the morals of Christianity, a more careful attention even to the letter of the New Testament, and to the methods of Jesus' teaching, might save such writers from their easy and off-hand manner of pronouncing judgment upon the virility of the ethics of the Christian faith. For a little reflection is enough to show that some of the milder precepts of the gospel carry in themselves their own moral qualifications and limitations. Moreover, it is to be conceived that Jesus in his ethical-religious teaching may have assumed some duties as well-known truths which required no special emphasis, which indeed were exaggerated in the common

Jewish proportion of the virtues, while their opposites were neglected or forgotten. Years of oppression had made the Jewish mind naturally resentful; the sense of injustice was become a part of their national heritage. The patriots from Galilee were ready to rise in insurrection on the slightest occasion. Many Jews, bold to foolhardiness, had rushed to death against the pikes of the Roman legions. And the people would have made a political leader and king even of the Son of man. But while courage and avenging of wrong were not unknown among a people who in their national calamity could boast of a Judas Maccabeus, the scribes and doctors of the law were not merciful, and the Pharisees were binding on men's consciences burdens too heavy to be borne. The bold virtues were not in special need of a prophet shortly before the Jewish war. Jesus of Nazareth had more difficult moral lessons to teach. The graces which were rarest in the city of David become conspicuous in the kingdom of the Son of man. Neither in any age can the natural gravitation of human nature be deemed favorable to precisely those virtues and duties which Jesus seems to have been at the most pains to enforce by precepts of striking originality, and which he signally illustrated in his own life of divine sympathy and helpfulness among men. Not for Judea only in its hopeless hate of the oppressor, but for all lands and times, the Master, with a divine insight into the natural workings of the human heart, puts the moral emphasis of his gospel on those obligations which human self-seeking is apt to pass by on the other side; Jesus throws the mighty influence of his life on the side of those ethical forces which, because they are the most heavenly, are most in need of illustration by conspicuous example, and which require constant spiritual energizing from above. To this day is not forgiveness a more divine than human glory? Is not the publican still an object of heaven's pity more than of human help? Is not the lesson of the good Samaritan a most needed lesson even in our modern cities, whose police have their clubs ready for the thieves? Is not the humanness of Christ's compassion for the people the ethical truth which religion

itself is tempted to forget, and which always needs to be kept in the heart of Christ's ministering Church? It is no accident, it is no evidence of a limited wisdom, that the moral emphasis of the gospel is found to rest on that side of civilization which evidently in all ages most needs to be accentuated by the Holy Ghost.

In this connection, moreover, the fact should not be overlooked that in the crises of Jesus' ministry we do not observe a single waver by the Master of any just right. He met the Pharisees with unflinching assertion of his spiritual authority.[1] Neither in the palace of the high priest, nor before Pilate's judgment throne, did Jesus relinquish any of his legal rights. And that scene in the temple when the money-changers were driven out, belongs to the oldest narratives of Jesus' life, and was not omitted from the gospel of John.[2] The hand that permitted itself to be nailed to the cross, was the hand that had held the whip of cords, and overthrown the tables of the money-changers in the temple. In the truest moral reality Jesus' whole life was an assertion of human rights, — a constant and courageous warfare for the just supremacy of love; but the form which his conflict against wrong should take, was determined by the will of the Father which was given him to do. Could his work have been finished by seeking death in the thick of some heroic battle for the right, doubtless the Son of man would have met his hour in bravest surrender of his life; but his was a greater work of faith to be accomplished through a more awful sacrifice, and the Son of man went as it was determined on his way to the cross.

The spirit of Jesus' conflict for truth and right descends to the disciples; but the manner of their imitation of Christ is to be determined by the providential commissions of his followers. Heroic devotion has many forms, — the Lord's cross, the martyr's chariot of fire, the glory of the battle's front, the patience of daily sacrifice; but the spirit of consecration in which the Lord gave his life for the world is the same power of moral heroism in all its possible manifestations.

[1] Matt. xii. 25-28. [2] Matt. xxi. 12; Mark xi. 15; John ii. 14.

It is not ungracious also to observe that when insistence on rights is regarded as the cardinal virtue, a man's character is apt to assume a one-sided and uncomfortable pugnacity; and the moral philosophy which would make the conflict for right the commanding obligation, would become loveless at heart and ineffectual even in its conflict with the world, unless it should master Jesus' truth of finding life by losing it, and learn his method of overcoming evil with good.

In view of these considerations it is obvious that in the ethics of Jesus what is due to the right and its maintenance is not yielded or forgotten; yet in the teaching and example of the Christ the crude human sense of justice is ennobled and refined in the flame of sacrificial devotion. It is not to be denied in the name of Christ that justice is an essential attribute of God, and that it is to be done among Christian men. The sure bounds of justice are necessary to the onward movement of love, as the firm banks are necessary to the beneficence of a widening river. Yet justice needs to be kept full of the love whose blessing it bears and guards; the ethics of Christianity, not disregarding the necessary limits of justice, are most concerned with keeping the springs of love pure and full.

There may arise an ethical necessity of standing up for one's rights, and in such cases the motto which Ihering advanced as a positive moral maxim becomes the rule of conduct: "Im Kampfe sollst Du Dein Recht finden." But concerning this author's "Kampf um's Recht," Höffding justly remarks: "The contention for the right is contention for one of the most important goods of human life, although Ihering goes too far, when he affirms, under both commandments: do no wrong! and suffer no wrong! the latter is the more important. It marked a great ethical advance when for the first time the position was taken, it is better to suffer wrong than to do wrong. Ihering's affirmation is correct only when from convenience or indifference one lets a wrong occur, or when one has lost an eye for the practical importance of the right for human life." — *Ethik*, s. 412.

(3) From the Christian conception of justice (filled with love) the obligation immediately issues of giving to every man his dues. And this duty carries in it the further obligation, so far as we have power, of securing to all men their just dues.

At the close of an elaborate confession of Christian faith which a Puritan preacher who left England to become the founder of the First Church of Christ in New Haven in 1639, the Rev. John Davenport, made publicly

"before the congregation at his admission into one of the churches of God in New England," is a noteworthy article entitled, "Concerning giving every man his due." This article is made a part of his theological system of doctrines, and it stands on the same line with his most solemn religious avowals. It contains the social ethics of the Puritan creed as follows: "That unto all men is to be given whatsoever is due to them, in regard of their office, place, gifts, wages, estate, and condition; endeavoring ourselves to have always a conscience void of offence towards God, and towards men."

(4) The means of justice which Christians may use to get justice done in the world, present some further problems of duty for the sound Christian conscience to solve. In all civilized communities there exists an established order of justice. The system of jurisprudence is a method, necessarily somewhat mechanical, of securing uniformities in social products, — a rough and ready method of getting equal and exact justice done in human affairs. But because it is a system of justice it is necessarily limited and imperfect. Perfect justice cannot be obtained through any generalization of legal procedure.

Exact justice in all human affairs could be rendered by the state only if it were conceived to be an omnipresent and omnipotent judge in the world. The mechanical fixity of legal forms is modified somewhat by the rules of equity, and relieved by the occasional exercise of the right to pardon which is permitted to the executive powers. In such ways there is left enough give and play in the system of law to prevent its breaking to pieces under the strain and exigencies of human affairs. But beyond this primary and general justice in the more obvious concerns of life, no system of human law can be conceived as reaching.

Consequently, to see justice done on the earth, resort must continually be had, beyond the legal powers of the state, to the action and the influence of just men in all the affairs of life. Herein is large scope for the beneficence of individual justice. By wise counsels, by righteous decisions, by luminous words and teaching, the wrongs which lie beyond the reach of the law, and much injustice which has no legal remedy, may be prevented, alleviated, or removed. Indeed, human justice in the finer qualities and perhaps for the larger part of it, must be administered outside all courts. In those personal relations which need to be maintained in all honorableness, and any wound of

which is felt as the keenest wrong, righteousness and peace are to be preserved, not by judgments of law, but by the pervasive and healing virtue of the examples of just men, and their personal influence amid the confusions and conflicts of social intercourse and friendships.

So far as the moral right of a Christian to go to law for redress of an injury is concerned, the apostolic injunction to the Corinthians[1] is obviously not meant as a precept of universal validity, although it was made necessary by the nature of the existing Gentile courts and the novel social position of the first Christians; the spirit of the injunction, however, remains good for all times, and the precept may be taken as a caution and restraint now that the particular occasion for it has passed away.[2]

Under this general obligation, not only of being just, but of seeing justice done around us, it often becomes a perplexing question whether we should interfere in matters of dispute between other men, or how far it is obligatory on the individual to insist either for others or himself on some personal right. No general ethical maxim can be laid down to cover these individual instances of the obligation of justice. One's personal position and possible influence are to be weighed in determining the duty of positive interference for the sake of seeing justice done. Effort without use even as a protest may seem to be waste of a man's spirit, and reserve of force for fitting occasion may be the only duty. But self-interest and moral cowardice may easily hide under the plea of the impossibility of accomplishing anything through personal endeavor. Other claims on one's time, strength, and resources are to be put in the balance with the demand of some particular wrong for championship. The weapons within reach are to be carefully chosen, the time and the opportunity considered. The extent of the wrong threatened, or the evil

[1] 1 Cor. vi. 1.

[2] In Perkin's *Cases of Conscience*, the earliest systematic Puritan treatise on morals, published in London in 1606, this question is discussed, "Whether a man may defend himself by law?" This comment is to the point: "When Paul saith, it is a fault, he condemneth not lawing absolutely in itself, but the Corinthian manner of going to law" (p. 290).

suffered, may also enter as an element in a rational judgment of one's personal obligation to justice; although the quantity of evil done may not afford a decisive reason for refusing to insist on a right, as injustice at many minor points may gain too firm a hold on society, and, if everywhere quietly suffered, amount in the sum total of it to intolerable evil.

While these and similar considerations must enter into the individual judgment, and one should not make haste to be contentious even for the right, it can hardly be denied that the natural indifference and indolence of the spirit in man, as well as the common good nature, if only men are tolerably well fed and provided for, tend to dull a wholesome regard for rights, and to induce an easy complacency in view of public wrongs. Bad men thrive from the deadness of the civic conscience. Public spirit, they know, is not easily aroused by small offences, and they rely on a general indifference in the community to transactions which, though admittedly evil, do not directly affect private interests. The spoilers make merry while the public conscience sleeps. Occasionally public opinion will arouse itself, seize its club like a giant, strike down the nearest malefactors whom it may happen to hit, and, well pleased with its momentary exhibition of its virtuous vigor, say to those who have stirred it up, 'Don't trouble me more'; — and go good-naturedly to sleep again. And erelong the thieves steal back to the plunder.

Every community needs men of intelligence who are watchful of public interests, and willing, whenever required, to throw themselves into the effort of seeing justice done. The obligation of maintaining the public interest rests upon all citizens, and may be urged with especial force upon those whose position gives them exceptional opportunity of discovering what just causes ought to be championed, and what agitation for the public welfare needs to be made. The educated classes, the well-informed men of affairs, are by reason of their intelligence and resources the natural guardians of justice in a community. Men have a right to expect of them active participation in public affairs. The

scholar belies his education if he can be content to keep out of politics. Whoever has voice or influence is under moral obligation to use his voice and to consecrate his influence to the true cause needing advocacy, and to advance which he has personal responsibility, and for which he must render account as for the just and righteous will of God given him to do on earth.

2. The duty of speaking the truth.

In the New Testament believers are enjoined to speak truth in love.[1] Love is the element in which truth is to be spoken, and speaking it is to be a manifestation of love. Without truth-speaking, as without just dealing, love could not be kept as the bond of perfectness.

The law of truthfulness is a supreme inward law of thought; — does it admit any exceptions as a law of manners and speech?

Some moralists, like Kant, have held that no circumstances justify speaking a falsehood. It cannot be concealed, however, that this rigorous ethics of Kant, and the habit of the sound human understanding, do not by any means go together. There are many evasions and some falsifications which the instincts of loving natures and the habits of society admit, if they do not justify. In war, in diplomacy to a less extent, and in medicine, the theories of the rigorous moralists are commonly put one side.

How does the matter stand in the judgment of the Christian consciousness? Are there any limitations to the obligation of veracity? Before we are in a position to give an intelligent answer to this question we need to inquire more particularly to whom truthfulness is owed.

(1) It is an obligation which every man owes to himself. It is a primal personal obligation. Kant was profoundly right when he regarded falsehood as a forfeiture of personal worth, a destruction of personal integrity. Our first duty to ourselves, as we have already urged, requires truth in the inward parts. Truthfulness is the self-consistency of character; falsehood is a breaking up of the moral integrity. Inward truthfulness is essential to

[1] Eph. iv. 15.

moral growth and personal vigor, as it is necessary to the live oak that it should be of one fibre and grain from root to branch. What a flaw is in steel, what a foreign substance is in any texture, that a falsehood is to the character, — a source of weakness, a point where under strain it may break. Christian morality lays the sanction of its sublime conception of God's holiness upon this virtue of truth in the inward parts. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all";[1] — the true God is absolutely sincere, as the pure light, to himself; there is no darkness at all in the whole infiniteness of his self-existence and self-knowledge. Man, as the image of God, was made to have light within himself, without shadow of self-deception or darkness of falsehood in his heart. The law of inward truth requires us to become clear as the noonday to ourselves. This is an ideal indeed of inward sincerity which only one has realized perfectly in a human self-consciousness. The mind of man so easily becomes enveloped in exhalations of its own fancies, and in its heavy atmosphere of prejudices, that it may hardly have a clear moment of self-revelation in whole days of vanity.

This absolute obligation of inward sincerity is enough to put us on our guard against practising social deceptions, — those easy falsehoods which without any malice or apparent injury may be practised for the sake of social convenience. Their inward reaction is evil. Though they may do others no harm, they may impair the fineness of the soul's powers of perception. Almost without our being aware of it they may eat into the inward soundness of character. No one can wear repeatedly a habit of affectation before others except at the cost of his own integrity. One cannot seek to seem to be more to others than he knows he is, without peril of becoming in his own eyes more than he is. Through false outward semblances he makes himself eventually an artificial man through and through. Let this habit of untruthfulness in little social things, and daily affectations of manners, continue, and a wholly unnatural type of character, eaten out with insin-

[1] 1 John i. v.

cerities, may be the result. Still more a single conscious sophistry or self-deception, one inward falsehood which is loved, and not resolutely cast out, may prove evil enough to spoil the entire wholesomeness of a soul. It may destroy the inward eye for truth and for the vision of God, as the point of a needle is sufficient to put out the eye of the body. There is a world of ethical experience, as well as the pathos of a sad knowledge of the power of sin in a human heart, to be found in that saying of the Lord: "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness!" [1]

Truthfulness, then, is due, first, by the individual to himself as the obligation of personal integrity. The unity of the personal life consists in it.

(2) Truthfulness is owed to society as essential to its integrity. It is the indispensable bond of social life. Men can be members one of another in a social organism only as they live together in truth. Society would fall to pieces without credit; but credit rests on the general social virtue of truthfulness. The better organized society is, the more complicated its interests, and the wider the reach of its business, so much the more credit will be required, and hence the more veracity is needed, as the cement of the whole social structure. One can travel the world over, if he have a bit of paper in his pocket with a few good names upon it, because credit, which rests on the truthfulness of men to their promises, has come to be throughout the civilized world as good as gold. Anything which eats into credit corrodes the very bond by which the whole structure of human society is held together. Thus the liar is rightly regarded as an enemy to mankind. A lie is not only an affront against the person to whom it is told, but it is an offence against humanity. A lying spirit pervading a land is a sign of social dissolution. No national constitution is strong enough to endure continual and unpunished falsehood in the politics of a people. History is eloquent with warnings against social and national untruthfulness. When Rome fell, nobody could be believed.

[1] Matt. vi. 23.

Von Moltke could not have so quickly conquered France, had the way for his armies not been prepared by the civil and military falsehood which had honeycombed the last Napoleonic dynasty. A false dream of glory, a false confidence in the court, and falsehood in the military organization, were the fatal enemies to which Napoleonic France had already succumbed before ever the foreign hosts had reached its capital. The new France will be a truer France.

In view of the personal and social value of truthfulness as a virtue beyond all price, we may now estimate more definitely what is required by the obligation of veracity in several different directions, and with regard to some admitted perplexities of conduct.

The duty of truthfulness in the general affairs and relations of men goes without question. The duty, for instance, of truthfulness in work will not be denied, however much it may be forgotten. Sham work is not only personal negligence, but a social offence. Truthfulness is required in the arm of the day laborer, the hand of the mechanic, the finger of the artist, the pen of the capitalist, the brain of the thinker, and in the very imagination of the poet. An offence against the social order of life is committed by adulterations of food, in substitutions of cotton for wool, and of glue for honest nails, in varnishing old materials over into new, and by watering stocks, as well as when combinations of colors which nature would not tolerate, are sold as works of art, and sentiments with which real life is not spiced are served up in novels, not to mention the multitudinous humbugs which the love of vanity and the greed of gain are now prolific in begetting; — these all are violations of the first principles of social order, and would be enough, if not checked and constantly beaten back by a public sense of truth and righteousness, to overwhelm a country in its own falsehoods and to turn a great city into an abomination of desolation. An urgent ethical need of the times is a revival of truthfulness amid all handicrafts. The work of society calls for severe truthfulness, the truth-

fulness not of men-pleasers, but of honest workmen who labor, as Milton wrote,

> "As ever in my great Taskmaster's eye";

the truthfulness of men who go to the work of their lives with something of the religious awe which actuated the cathedral builders in what we are pleased to call the dark ages, who carved with careful truth the farthest statues on the highest pinnacles of Gothic cathedrals, and were as painstaking in the tracery of leaf and flower along the upper and scarce visible arches and lines of their great forests in stone, as they were in the ornamentation of the arches beneath which the coming generations were to pass. Civilization needs salvation from sham work, sham thought, sham service, sham study, sham literature, sham orthodoxy. Exaggerations of expression and undue superlatives of speech may fall under the condemnation of simple and severe truthfulness. The choice words of the English tongue were not made for common use on all possible occasions. Language has its sacred vessels. It is profanation of speech to use them for unworthy things. These exaggerations may be trivial faults; but the habit of superlative speech on the slightest occasion is essentially profane, and, if indulged in persistently, it will show in time evil reactions on the sincere strength of the character.

There are, however, some other instances of apparent social untruthfulness which do not fall so readily under condemnation; they retain, at least, against the exhortations of the rigorous moralists a certain good standing in society. An instance of these apparently harmless deviations from exact and scrupulous truthfulness is furnished by the fleeting fictions which the merry heart delights to weave. There is a natural and not unhealthy play of fancy which often seems to give spice to conversation and to lend variety to life. Yet in this fancifulness of mirth there is usually no real deception either intended or conveyed. But wit reaches its limit of pleasing license whenever it becomes really untruthful, — whenever it points a falsehood, or wrongs the reality of friendship. In the use

of a quick fancy or a sharp wit the temptation is to be guarded against of a real falsification of things. Wit may bubble up and sparkle as the jets of a fountain in the sunshine; but we must keep our wit pure from the falsehood which might destroy the freshness of social intercourse, and prove fatal to the joy of friendship.

What shall be said of the ordinary fictions of polite society? The language of courtesy is full of phrases which are meant to veil the exact truth. Goethe once said of his countrymen, "The German lies, so soon as he becomes polite." Sometimes positive untruth may be intentionally hidden beneath these current phrases of politeness. Ordinarily, however, like paper money, though worthless in themselves, they have value in the general social credit and responsibility which they represent. So far as such phrases are convenient as the small change of social intercourse, which, were it necessary, should any real occasion arise, might be redeemed in the real service and helpfulness for which these light passing words of politeness stand, they cannot be regarded as counterfeits of the inward truth of human hearts. A certain human sense, as St. Augustine allows, seems to give worth to these polite fictions of speech. Without the language of courtesy society would be like a vast factory without lubricating oil, — a perpetual rattle with increasing friction, and perhaps in the end, without these necessary drops of social oil here and there, everything human might be brought to a standstill.

Inward truthfulness would seem accordingly to permit many words of politeness and humanity to come to the lips as habitual expressions of one's deepest and always intended regard for others, even although at times the tide of good feeling and sympathy may by no means be on the flood. The lips remain true to the deeper purpose and willed character of the man, while they refuse to reflect his passing mood and superficial feeling. The words are steadfastly kept true to our settled ideas of the relations we should and will sustain to all men, even to some whose presence may perhaps be felt as an interruption and a bore.

Much polite manner and speech is a praiseworthy, though often too heartless endeavor to carry out in society the golden rule. And the practice with sincere intention of these forms of golden speech may prove a refinement of the spirit as well as of the manners.

But when these pleasant forms of courteous language are worn as a cloak by a repulsive inward selfishness, as one would put on a garment, to be thrown aside when there is no more occasion for their use, then they become a means of deception which is evil and only evil; such false use of these phrases of politeness will speedily avenge itself in rendering the heart still more incapable of sincere friendship and genuine enjoyment of life. And an ill-bred heart cannot long be hidden beneath any of these pleasing fashions of speech.

(3) We reach now, however, some cases of conscience under the law of veracity which are not so plain, and to resolve which we need to consider more carefully to whom the obligation of truthfulness is due. These cases of conscience arise from the so-called lies of necessity. Some moralists in their supreme regard for truth will not admit that under any conceivable circumstances a lie can be deemed necessary, not even to save life or to prevent a murderer from accomplishing his fiendish purpose. But the sound human understanding, in spite of the moralists, will prevaricate, and often with great vigor and success, in such cases. Who is right, — Kant, or the common moral sense? Which should be followed, — the philosophic morality, or the practice of otherwise most truthful men?

It is trifling with this question to hold that, while veracity is the only admissible law of speech, certain seemingly necessary transgressions of this law may be pardoned as venial faults. Either a falsehood under such circumstances is wrong, or it is right; either it should not be in any wise permitted, or it should be justified with a good conscience. St. Augustine, arguing with St. Jerome concerning Paul's rebuke of Peter's dissembling, remarked: "Unless peradventure you are able to give us rules when a man should lie and when he should not"; which he politely requests

St. Jerome to do "without doubtful or deceptive reasons, if it can be done."[1] In this St. Augustine betrays a healthful moral instinct. If we cannot tell a falsehood with a clear conscience, if we cannot "lie by rule," it would be far better never to speak an untruthful word.

In a perfect world of perfect health no occasion for this moral question concerning exceptions to the law of veracity would arise. Sinless beings would need nothing but their own transparency for their safety, and evasion would never be thought of as a vital necessity. But we live in a world which is not yet made perfect, and where nature itself abounds in colors of mimicry and uses arts of concealment for the preservation of life. Our social obligations are the duties of men and women under the conditions of this present world. Some of these necessary conditions of life seem at times to require deception as the only available weapon of self-preservation, — which is a primary duty, — or as the only possible means for the immediate protection, which love may require, of another's life. Is deception under such conditions ever justifiable?

It may be answered in part that a wise foresight will avoid to a great degree the circumstances which might seem to render some deception necessary. Regard for the supreme obligation of truth will require watchfulness, and alert understanding of the circumstances of daily life, in order that this apparent collision of different moral claims may be avoided. The so-called necessary lies are often necessities only to the improvident and the weak, and consequently their chief moral offence antedates the deception and is to be charged rather to some previous moral shiftlessness. Many complications, from which it seems difficult for a man to extricate himself with truthfulness, might be avoided by a little forethought, and it is our fault if we find ourselves caught in them. If such be the case, it may prove a useful discipline for us to refuse the means of escape by the least deception from a situation whose consequences we choose to endure as a just chastisement of our improvidence. But considerations like these furnish only

[1] *Epis. ad Hieron.*, 5.

a preliminary caution, not a full answer to such cases of conscience.

In attempting to give ethical reasons in justification of the natural moral instinct which leads men to permit the lies of necessity, moralists have themselves sometimes entered on very doubtful ground. Some have observed that malice is a constituent element of a lie; and consequently they have held that deception without any poison of malice in it is not necessarily harmful, and in some supposed instances may even be deemed salutary. The hurt of falsehood, they urge, consists not simply in speaking an untruth, but in speaking an untruth in a loveless spirit; the falsehood is not merely a deception, but a harmful deception. Literal or outward truthfulness, it has been suggested, should not be absolutely demanded against the dictates of inward truthfulness, the truthfulness of a loving spirit. For example, if you can save a life by a falsehood, fidelity, it is said, may require of you that deception.

On strictly utilitarian grounds we might make easier work with these cases of conscience than we may in view of transcendental principles of morals. For while the social good requires truthfulness in general, a law of social utilities may admit of exceptions; and the common obligation of truthfulness, therefore, according to utilitarian ethics, may be conceived to be modified or suspended in cases where the social consequences of truth-speaking are clearly seen to be disastrous, or where the social welfare, as judged by the average experience of men, plainly requires the use of some deception.[1]

On either of these grounds the venture of untruthfulness is hazardous. The former view, while touching on a real distinction between the inward truthfulness of love and the outward expression of it as circumstances may permit, nevertheless introduces a principle of discrimination often too fine for practical uses, and it is perilously subjective in its determination of duty. The other utilitarian method

[1] So Mr. Leslie Stephen, with consistent utilitarianism, writes: "Exceptions are recognised, and these exceptions still obey the general rule of conformity to the conditions of social welfare." — *Science of Ethics*, p. 207.

seems almost too easy a solution of any moral problem for a conscience that is profoundly impressed with the absolute transcendental value of the moral law.

All justifiable exceptions to general moral commandments, we hold, should themselves proceed from fixed moral principles. In order that we may discover what, if any, principle warrants these exceptions to the commandment of veracity, let us put the matter before us in a single concrete case. We take the classic instance, to which writers on morals have often referred, of the Roman matron whose husband and two sons lay sick at the same time. Just at the crisis of the father's disease one of the sons died. The father asked after the health of the boy. The Roman mother restrained her tears, and went with a cheerful air to the sick-bed of her husband. To his inquiry after his son she answered, "He is better"; and hastened away to conceal her sorrow. From that moment the father began to recover. Was the woman right or wrong in that falsehood?

We answer without hesitation that she was right in following under those circumstances the instinct of her love, because in the conditions then existing she owed to her husband the utmost she could do for his recovery; but in his weakness, which would have rendered him incapable of receiving the truth, she did not owe to him immediately the duty of speaking the truth. Let us look carefully, however, at the principle involved in this answer. It is a simple principle, yet a far-reaching one. The rule for all these cases of conscience may be stated thus: speaking the truth is an obligation which we owe to all other rational creatures; it is a social duty; but evidently it cannot be owed whenever, from the nature of the case, no claims can be made upon us for the truth. Neither is it owed when it is perfectly clear that those claims have been morally forfeited, or temporarily lost. But this forfeiture of claims upon our truthfulness needs to be determined with sound ethical judgment, and not at our convenience, or by our supposed self-interest. The law is; we are under obligation to give the truth, and no falsehood, to all

who have claims to know the truth from us. But in this statement of the law of truth-speaking the moral limitation of the obligation is also included. It is to be found in the nature and extent of the human right to the truth. All men as members of human society have certain general claims upon one another for the truth. Do any men, or men under any special circumstances, lose that social right and cease to have immediate claim upon others for the truth? This is the moral core of the question.

To approach this claim to the truth from an obvious extreme, we may say that animals, strictly speaking, can have no immediate rights to our words of truth, since they belong below the line of existence which marks the beginning of any functions of speech. They may have direct claims upon our humanity, and so indirectly put us under obligations to give them straightforward and fair treatment; truthfulness to the domestic animal, to the horse or the dog, is to be included as a part of our general obligation of kindness to creatures that are entirely dependent upon our fidelity to them and their wants.

Thus it is not a sin against truth to drive horses with blinders, although it may be a foolish thing so to train them; neither is it untruthfulness on our part to catch trout with artificial flies, although it may be against the ethics of true sportsmanship to kill more fish than one needs.

For a similar reason, whenever it can be held, without sophistry, or inward jugglery with ourselves, that a human being has put himself beyond the pale of human society and its general obligations, — whether he has fallen below the line of human capability through some disease which has temporarily rendered him delirious, or made him too weak to receive the truth which otherwise would be his due, or whether he has dehumanized himself by some criminal intent, and has cast himself out beyond immediate claim to any human consideration except justice; — then, in such cases, the law of truth-speaking finds its legitimate and necessary limitation in such forfeiture of the right to the truth, and consequently our obligation to speak it ceases. Our conduct in such instances is morally to be determined by the expediencies of love. The moral

principle involved might be formulated in these words: in proportion as from any cause a person approaches the line beneath which, or beyond which, no just right, or human claim, exists for the truth, in that proportion our obligation of speaking the truth draws near its ethical limit, and other moral considerations rise to assert themselves.

This social law of truth, and its inherent principle of limitation, may be followed in all these cases of conscience. When nations, for example, are at war, all rights except those humanities generally recognized in the ethics of warfare, are for the time held in abeyance. If the war is justifiable, the ethics of warfare come at once into play. It would be absurd to say that it is right to kill an enemy, but not right to deceive him. Falsehood, it may be admitted, as military strategy, is justifiable, if the war is righteous.

An officer in our civil war was once taken captive during a confused fight in a piece of woods. The lines on both sides had become very much entangled during the engagement. The squad of Confederates into whose hands the officer had fallen were separated from their command, and did not know in which direction through the thick underbrush they should seek for their own lines. The Union officer overheard them saying to one another, "Ask that Yankee; he will lie, and we will go in the opposite direction." So he told them the truth, and by means of the truth which he knew would be received as a falsehood by his captors, he deceived them, leading them straight into his own command, and they became his prisoners. Should he have told them a falsehood for the sake of giving them the truth? His right to fight with his tongue was as valid as his right to draw his sword; neither can be justified except on the principle that in war the common social obligations between man and man are for good reasons temporarily set aside.

Suppose, as another instance, that a tramp bent on mischief stands before a woman in the door of her home. The law would justify her in the use of any necessary means of self-defence. She has wit enough to defend herself by a word. She calls her husband, who is absent, as though he were in the next room. She practises some successful deceit which she is quick enough to invent, and frightens the tramp away. Her justification for the successful falsehood is given in the threatening relation to her which has been assumed by the man bent on mischief who stands at

her door, or the thief who looks into her window. He has forfeited by his criminal intent all claim to any human consideration except justice. He stands no longer within the pale of mutual social obligations; he is no better than a dangerous beast, or a madman who must be restrained.[1]

Not only in some cases of necessity is falsehood permissible, but we may recognize a positive obligation of love to the concealment of the truth. Other duties, which under such circumstances have become paramount, may require the preservation of one's own or another's life through a falsehood. Not only ought one not to tell the truth under the supposed conditions, but, if the principle assumed be sound, a good conscience may proceed to enforce a positive obligation of untruthfulness. For the reason which under any circumstances would render deception permissible, must be an affirmative moral principle, and not a doubtful negative of duty; and as a direct justification of deception it may carry in it a positive obligation likewise to the course which it renders morally allowable. There are occasions when the interests of society and the highest motives of Christian love may render it much more preferable to discharge the duty of self-defence through the humanity of a successful falsehood, than by the barbarity of a stunning blow or a pistol-shot. General benevolence demands that the lesser evil, if possible, rather than the greater, should be inflicted on another.

The physician may have occasion in his practice to apply this ethical principle of the obligation, under certain conditions, of deception. Generally the truth will best serve his art; confidence does good like a medicine. But there

[1] Somewhat in the same way Jeremy Taylor reduced these cases to their moral principle: "If a lie be unjust, it can never become lawful; but if it can be separate from injustice, then it may be innocent. This right (to truth), though it be regularly and commonly belonging to all men, yet it may be taken away by a superior right supervening; or it may be lost, or it may be hindered, or it may cease upon a greater reason." A lie to children or madmen "must be such as is for their good. . . . Though they have no right to truth, yet they have right to defence and immunity." (*Ductor Dubitantium*, B. iii. ch. ii, 5, 6, 8). This is in the main sound, but the ground of the right to the truth needs to be more carefully discriminated in order that its possible forfeiture may be ethically admitted. The ultimate ground of this, as of other social obligations, lies in cur common humanness as children of the one God.

are crises of disease when to tell at once the whole truth might prove the sure defeat of the physician's skill; in such emergencies it may not merely be permitted him to conceal his superior knowledge and to prevaricate if necessary; it may become also his duty, in fulfilment of the work for which he has been summoned, to deceive; for the patient has been committed to his hands with a certain relinquishment of rights which otherwise he might maintain; and the sick man, moreover, from the relation in which he has been put to his physician, acquires a right to all that the physician can possibly do for his recovery; the patient has claims on his doctor both for his knowledge in the exercise of his art, and for his concealment, so far as may be necessary, of his knowledge from him. The ethics of the medical profession rightly includes both these obligations. The wise physician will learn from experience how best to apply his code in the individual instance. The general obligation of truth-speaking is held by the good physician to be paramount, and concealment will be deemed justifiable only in cases where it is clearly indicated by the conditions or symptoms of the patient, as a dangerous drug might be indicated; and it is always to be remembered that on the whole truth affords the best regimen, and that even a temporary benefit may prove too dear a cost for loss of confidence in a physician's word. Moreover, in extreme and hopeless cases, the man who is sick unto death may by the very desperateness of his condition reclaim his right to know the truth; and deception, when no longer to be practised as an art of recovery, might be a wrong done to his last will towards others, as well as to the health of his soul. Our concealments may become impertinences in the awe of the presence of death.

To sum up, then, what has been said concerning the so-called lies of necessity, the principle to be applied with wisdom is simply this: give the truth always to those who in the bonds of humanity have right to the truth; conceal it, or falsify it, only when it is unmistakably evident that the human right to the truth from others has been forfeited, or temporarily is held in abeyance by sickness,

weakness, or some criminal intent: do not in any case prevaricate, unless you can tell the necessary falsehood deliberately and positively, from principle, with a good conscience void of offence toward men, and sincere in the sight of God.

(4) While admitting these moral exceptions to the general law of veracity, Christian ethics will lay emphasis upon the positive duties which are required of men by the supreme obligation of truthfulness. Not only is it a duty not to speak falsely, but also there is an obligation to be recognized of giving the truth. The impartation of truth is a social duty under the commandment of benevolence, and is particularly enjoined by the love of Christ. The precept of the apostle, "Speaking truth in love," will govern both the manner and the contents of Christian conversation. Love should give form and temper to the word of truth. God in nature makes sparing use of his thunderbolts; the divine way, the established and regular method of God's action in making the earth fruitful, is by shining upon it. The effective way of speaking the truth is that indicated by Mr. Lowell's lines in an *Unfinished Poem:*

> "If you would preach, you must
> Steep all your truths in sunshine would you have them
> Pierce the crust."

The rude frankness and harsh plainness of speech, by which some persons are accustomed to bruise tenderer sensibilities, is never the mastery of love's art of speaking the truth. An occasional friendly use of truth, as a crash towel, may be wholesome; but ordinarily there is a more excellent way. The sincerity of love, even when it must open wounds, will have in it a healing virtue. And the truth itself when spoken with hate will be spoken falsely; for there is nothing in the world falser than hate, and no heresy can be more contradictory of God than the absence of love from one's creed. Love was the never-failing and radiant principle of the daily conversation of Jesus.

This positive obligation to give truth in love is a law of duty to the teacher, and to all who have power by any

means to cause wisdom to be heard among the people. It is the special duty to which the clergy are ordained; but it is no less the obligation of the whole body of believers. Christian charity reaches its broadest and highest obligation in the missionary obligation to preach the gospel to every creature. The duty of sharing the truth and giving the truth begins at home and extends as far as personal influence may reach, or wherever others may be sent by us as bearers of the truth around the world. In Christian ethics witnessing to the truth becomes a sacred part of the obligation which the Christian man owes to his Master and his Lord.

This missionary obligation of teaching the truth does not admit of any Jesuitical exceptions, for falsehood within the common bonds of humanity is not a permissible means of doing good. Falsehood can never be morally adopted as a method of doing good, because (1) on the lowest ground of expediency it is a means of doubtful utility.[1] (2) It can appeal to no valid ethical principle for a positive sanction. (3) It is not an exception which would prove the general social law of truth-speaking, but on the contrary would break it down. (4) Serving God with a lie for man's sake is a lack of faith in divine truth, and assumes an unauthorized responsibility for man's good. God is to be served as well as worshipped in truth.

The pedagogic principle, however, of accommodation to the powers of the pupil differs entirely from the maxim that the end justifies the means. Accommodation in teaching means simply that the truth is to be given so far as the pupil can receive it, and as fast as he is able to understand it. Accommodation of truth to receptive capacity is a principle of limitation in giving the truth, but it is not a rule of falsification. The law of pedagogic accommodation is violated when it is made a justification for any positive deception. A progressive revelation of truth must necessarily proceed by the method of accommodation. But partial knowledge, so far as it goes, will be true knowledge.

[1] At this point John Morley's appeal to "the true expediencies" against the usefulness of error, is commendable. — *On Compromise*, pp. 43 *seq.*

And the teaching which is accommodated to a low degree of receptive capacity will itself fit and stimulate the mind for clearer and fuller knowledge. This law of accommodation pervades the whole history of God's self-imparting love; and it is difficult to conceive how a Bible could be given to finite and sinful men in any other way. But the divine accommodation of truth to men does not end in a bondage in error, — it prepares the way and leads men's minds on into larger revelations of the truth. By the method of rightful accommodation in teaching errors will not be fixed and confirmed, but caused rather to fall away, and converted into the soil for new ideas and fresh growths of knowledge.

There is a constantly recurring temptation to a false use of the method of accommodation in the training of children, and even in the work of moral reform. Yet it is never morally justifiable to teach a falsehood for truth's sake, and in the long run such methods do no little harm. They are hurtful whether in the home, the school, or the church. While the truth must be accommodated to the mind of the child, in order that it may be imparted in any degree, it may be so accommodated as to be truth in the child's apprehension of it, and thus to prepare the way for his ready acceptance of more truth. If this is not accomplished, the teaching is bad as teaching, besides being false as ethics. No little effort and care indeed, on the part of parent and teacher, will be needed in order to give partial truth truthfully to the child; but the endeavor will find its reward in the child's growth in knowledge. And any false impression carelessly left in the minds of children will only retard their intellectual progress, and impair their power of knowing the truth.

There is occasion also for urging that the ethics of reform demands the use of the truth and nothing but the truth. Reforms themselves need reformation when they slip into the ways of political guile. Not with such weapons is any true interest of humanity to be served. Much modern literature of reform needs to be passed through the flame of refining truth. The first ethical duty of the re-

former is to be sure of his facts. We hasten no good cause by yoking sound truth with specious falsehood. It is better to go slower with the truth than to ride with the wind of a passing error.

Instances of this unethical method of reform are not far to seek. A chemist, for example, who has made much scientific investigation of the subject of foods, has called my attention to unscientific statements concerning alcohol in some temperance text-books. Frequent instances also of over-anxious zeal may be observed in the uncritical use of Scriptural texts in Sunday-school lessons. But nothing can be more dangerous to faith than to teach children views of the Bible which, when they grow older, they may learn were worthless. The very best results of scholarship in all departments need to be accommodated to the minds of children.

3. The Obligation of Honorableness.

Another quality of character in which the excellency of love will be manifested, is honorableness. Honor is not one of the simple, primary virtues, but rather is it to be regarded as a composite virtue. As the strength of iron receives the temper of steel, so manly virtue is perfected in the fineness and brightness of honor. We are accustomed to think of honor as a romantic virtue, redolent with memories of chivalry, — the daring and the pride of men whose rights hung on their lances and whose laws were made by their swords. Yet the manner in which the Bible insists on the honor of Jehovah as the splendor of his glory, might lead us to think that there may still be a sceptre and a throne for honor in the Christian hierarchy of the virtues. Divesting the word of fantastic coloring, and freeing it from romantic associations with chivalrous times which are past and gone forever, we find in honorableness a moral quality which was never more necessary to true manliness, and the loss of which in a commercial atmosphere would be disastrous to our whole spiritual inheritance.

It is not easy to define in what lies the secret and the charm of this virtue of honor; it may, however, be analyzed into several constituent elements of its grace. It springs from a high regard for the worth of one's own spiritual being, together with a sincere respect for the sacredness of

the persons of others. One essential element of it is true self-respect, — a profound regard for one's spiritual worth as a man made in the image of God and born for a noble immortality. This kind of humble yet exalted self-respect, which is necessary to a high sense of honor, is peculiarly Christian; and hence it was no accident that chivalric honor was a fruit of Christian and not classic history. The Christian doctrine of sin and redemption, while it humbles, exalts human nature; the highest regard for the fair honor of the soul springs from Christian penitence, as the mountain rises from the deepest valley into the glory of the cloud. Even the body becomes sacred to the Christian as a temple of the Spirit. He cannot dishonor it, or suffer it to become dishonored in any lust of the flesh. The true knight seeks through life the Holy Grail. The sense of honor involves also a fine perception of what under all circumstances and conditions is due to others. Genuine self-respect carries with it as high a regard for the worth of others. Honor will show its inward strength by a firm respect also for the rights, the claims, the feelings of others, even the least of one's fellow-men. "See that ye despise not one of these little ones,"[1] is the Christian commandment of honor; and the lesson of courtesy and true gentility of conduct has been left for us in those words of the gospel, which are unsurpassed in all the poetry of chivalry, concerning the gift of a cup of cold water only to the least of the disciples. The precepts of the New Testament concerning the duties of the several callings of life, of masters and servants, of parents and children, of husbands and wives, of the different orders, gifts, and ministries in the church, as well as the example of Jesus in the perfect honorableness of his daily intercourse with all classes and conditions of men, show what this thorough and fine honorableness of the Christian in every relation of life should be.

Another virtuous element indispensable to the honorable man is valor, — that courage which Plato called the love of the morally beautiful more than life. We rightly asso-

[1] Matt. xviii. 10.

ciate honor with the knightly spirit, for the honorable man must be brave. He who follows only the safe maxims of prudential wisdom, and never could leap to the front of human conflict in quick response to the call of some great duty, may die respected and in peace, but he will not win this consummate virtue, he will never be the soul of nobleness and honor, whom men will follow and women love. Courage to think and to speak the true thing, without counting the cost, belongs to the very breath of honor. Without this pure valor of spirit no manhood shall be made perfect.

In all these respects, and in the highest degree, the life of Jesus presents the example of honorableness. He never touched another's life with rude hand, and no man was so humble as not to receive from him princely greeting. Never was there chivalrous devotion among all the knights of the Cross to be compared with the Master's brave obedience unto death. Jesus Christ possessed the loftiest valor. He loved with supreme love the morally beautiful more than life. The Christ never was afraid. Of all men he alone knew no fear.

In memory of the strong and brave Son of God, who gave noble greeting to all men whom he met, and did no soul wrong by slightest word or act, and who went down unfearing to his death for the world, Christian ethics must enthrone, and sanctify, and bless the honor of a man's spirit; it bids us cherish and revere pure and lofty honorableness of character as the perfection of Christian grace.

II. DUTIES IN THE SPECIAL SPHERES OF SOCIAL LIFE

§ 1. — DUTIES IN THE FAMILY

As the Christian family is hallowed by the spirit of Christianity, and marriage held sacred by the Church, two ethical truths are combined in it, neither of which can be ignored or impaired without peril to the integrity of the home. The first is the objective worth of the family as the unitary social group; it is not to be regarded as de-

pendent for its origin or its maintenance on mere individual caprice or feeling. The other truth is the subjective sacredness of marriage as an act of individual choice and a free moral union of two persons in one life. These truths have not always been conjoined in the history of the family, nor do they appear historically to have been developed simultaneously; but each is necessary to the full ethical value of marriage, and both need to be guarded from tendencies of literature, or desires of life, which would exaggerate and even sacrifice the one at the cost of the other.

The individual choice and freedom in a true marriage, was the later of these two fundamental ethical conditions of the family to come to full recognition. In the Old Testament this personal element of love lies mostly in the background, as the truth of individualism in general waited for complete recognition in the life and teaching of Christ. And the subjective feeling, the individual romanticism of love, did not distinguish the early as it does the later Christian literature. Passionate devotion to the individual object of affection characterized the age of chivalry ; in the Protestant reformation, however, the objective and sacred worth of marriage as a divine institution was brought to clear recognition, while the more personal aspect of the marriage covenant was not passionately emphasized. Among the reformers wives were found by the advice of their friends, — happily so for Melanchthon and Calvin ; this likewise, as we learn from Isaac Walton's lives, was the method of finding a suitable companion which was adopted to his cost by the judicious Hooker. On the other hand the literature of romanticism has dwelt upon the attraction of beauty, and intensified the feeling and passion of individualism.

There is always danger that the objective truth and worth of things human may be lost in the flood of personal feelings; and the modern domestic novel in its intense representation of personal love often plays fast and loose with marriage as an objective institution in the sacredness and perpetuity of which the whole welfare of society is bound up.

The objective value of the family is not only the Christian doctrine of it on which the Church insists with severe moral earnestness, and which the State should uphold by its marriage laws, but it is also a fundamental social truth, which is attested and confirmed by physiological science and by the inductions of sociology. The facts of he-

redity justify the State in forbidding marriages which threaten to become sources of disease and crime, for the social welfare is so involved in the formation of the family that the State has the right to protect itself against any harm which may arise from a marriage against the laws of nature or the deductions of social science. This right of the State, it is true, must be exercised with great caution, and can be wisely embodied only in general laws for the restraint or prevention of socially unwholesome and improvident marriages; for interference with individual choice, even though socially justifiable on general principles, if carried too far might only serve to increase illicit alliances, in which case the remedy would drive the disease still deeper in, and serve only to aggravate the evil. We may look, however, to the social sciences for needed aid in the improvement of the marriage laws of Christian society.

In these days it seems hardly necessary to urge the other ethical truth of marriage, — its dependence for its moral value and spiritual blessing on intelligent personal choice. Marriage is a union for the highest ends of being, and therefore requires as the condition of its beatitude of the Spirit, not merely impulses of admiration and attraction of fancy, but deeper intellectual sympathies, and moral fitness. Both husband and wife, in the true realization of married felicity, are neither of them means merely of life and happiness to the other, but each exists as a moral end for the other, so that each is to seek and to find life in the good of the other; it is, consequently, a first condition for the attainment of this idea of marriage that both husband and wife should be capable of cherishing with sincere and thorough sympathy kindred feelings, views, and desires concerning the chief aims of human life and the objects for which they themselves should live and strive together with one mind and heart. Hence the highest unity of married life is to be found in oneness in the ideals of life. Married life reaches towards its supreme perfection when one Christian faith and hope become the spirit and the law of a human home. The injunction of the apostle that Christians should not be unequally yoked together with unbe-

lievers, still has ethical force so far as any inequality of aim and hope might serve to impair the unity of married love. Certainly two ideals of life, the one pure and noble, the other worldly and ignoble, cannot well be mated in the same home. Participation in one Christian ideal of life may make of marriage a communion in the Holy Ghost.

As marriage is an objective institution, having value for society as well as worth for the individual, it creates a certain obligation for individuals to enter into it. Because of its objective social worth marriage is not to be considered simply as a relation which may be permitted those who choose to take on themselves its vows; to marry is one of the general social obligations which rests upon all men. The law of social welfare is marriage; every one, therefore, ought to get married unless he can show good reason to the contrary.

Such reasons may be found in circumstances which render the establishment of a home impossible, or in some failure through individual misfortune of the subjective conditions necessary to the formation of a true marriage; or in the intervention of other moral claims which leave no question concerning the single and supreme duty of a man's or a woman's life. Tendencies to disease, or unfortunate physical conditions, may render marriage inadvisable, and excuse love itself from assuming its obligation. Any fashion, however, or social tendency is to be deplored which increases the conventional obstacles to marriage, and which thereby prevents unions that with less artificiality of manners might prove happy marriages for the young men and women who would enter into them. One of the social evils of the reign of plutocracy is the artificial elevation, and real moral degradation, of the ideas entertained in society concerning what constitutes a good marriage.

The objective and subjective ethics of marriage, which we have just pointed out, determine the right manner of its solemnization. As it is subjectively an act of free choice, its solemnization can be permitted only with the

full consent of both persons who appear to enter into its solemn obligation. Because it is also objectively a social institution, having value for the social whole, the State should take legal charge and cognizance of its institution and continuance. It would be a menace to the social order, should marriage be permitted as a private, unauthorized, and unwitnessed consent of a man and woman to live together as husband and wife.

The religious solemnization of marriage is commended by the fact that it is a social act and covenant honorably to be acknowledged before the Father of spirits, in whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.[1] The religious consecration of marriage will spring from a deep and sacred sentiment among those who have been trained in Christian homes to seek in all things for the blessing of God. Even the thoughtless and the worldly can hardly help feeling the religious solemnity of the wedding hour. Christian men and women will not think of entering on the supreme felicity of their earthly existence, of beginning a new life of twain made one, without appearing before their God, and in His invisible but felt presence taking the vows of the holiest of human covenants upon them.

The Church in a free State cannot insist on the right to be represented at every wedding, and it must admit the validity of civil marriages. But Christian ethics will regard marriage as much more than a civil compact; it is a spiritual union; if in no merely churchly sense, yet in a real consecration, it is a sacrament of life, the most sacred covenant of earth, symbolic of the spiritual communion of heaven.[2] The deepest ethical sense of responsibility should blend with an exalted religious feeling as its solemn vows are assumed, and the self-consecration of husband and wife to each other should be made in the fear of God, and with grateful prayer to Him who is love, and who has given us these human hearts with which to love.

Since marriage is an ethical bond of union, it is possible that it may be broken by sin. As death may dissolve the

[1] Eph. iii. 15. [2] Eph. v. 30.

earthly and physical relationship, so sin may cut asunder the moral and spiritual union between husband and wife. In an imperfect moral world, under conditions of sore temptation, it is impossible to pronounce the marriage relation to be absolutely indissoluble. Human and divine law alike admit therefore the possibility of divorce. The important question is, what sin may be regarded as sufficient to warrant the State in annulling the marriage contract, or justify the Christian man or woman in seeking to be freed from its bonds?

As marriage is a social compact to be formed under the sanctions of law, it is admitted that it cannot terminate except with the consent of the social whole of us according to some legal judgment. If we reason simply from the ethical nature of the marriage obligation without reference to the distinctive teachings of Christianity as determined primarily by the words of Christ concerning divorce, the moral principle for the legal termination of marriage will not be difficult to find. Whatever sin destroys either the essential, physical basis or the ethical integrity of the marriage relation, may offer a cause for divorce which the State may properly bring to the consideration of its courts. A sin which is less than that in its aim and consequence, should not be alleged as a sufficient legal ground for divorce. This general principle follows directly from the moral nature of the marriage covenant. It should be legally declared void only when by a course of sin it has been already actually destroyed; the law may recognize and determine the fact of a broken marriage relation; it cannot itself break it. The bond is morally sundered by such crime, and by such crime only, as renders it impossible for one party or the other to keep its obligation without sinning either against the first obligation of nature to self-preservation, or against the marriage covenant itself. Adultery is thus a universally recognized ground of absolute divorce because it is an act of unfaithfulness to the marriage vow by which the one false to it breaks it asunder; and because also for the other person continuance in marriage with an adulterer would render

the innocent a party to the offence, — a third consenting party in a triple relationship, which, if knowingly continued, would thereby become for all concerned a guilty partnership in crime. While possibly in rare cases love may be justified in condoning a past offence which has been sincerely repented of, no one can keep on living in the married relationship with one practising adultery, without entering indirectly indeed, but as a consenting participant, into the sin against the integrity of the home.[1] Are there other, lesser sins against the home, which amount to such an ethical destruction of marriage as to justify its legal dissolution because rendering continuance in it by the injured party itself a species of adultery, — a married life, that is, utterly despoiled of those ethical contents which are necessary in order to make marriage honorable and the bed undefiled? The Roman Church, taking its stand on the letter of the commandment of Christ, and asserting matrimony to be a sacrament of the Church, will allow no other cause for absolute divorce. Protestants have been much divided, however, concerning this subject. Apart from purely Scriptural grounds it is urged that divorces may properly be granted when marriage is ended by desertion, or the home destroyed by habitual intemperance, or the fulfilment of the nuptial vow made forever impossible by a crime for which the husband or wife is sentenced for life to state prison. It is further urged that it would be imposing a great and unnecessary hardship upon the innocent to compel either person to bear for life the consequences of such heinous sins by the other; that after due process of law re-marriage should be permitted, and that no moral interest of society would suffer in consequence. All, it is said, which the State can properly be asked to do, is to protect the sanctity of the marriage-tie against lawless individualism; and at the same time to affirm the worth of the family to society by placing such restraints around the entrance into matrimony, and such compulsions against voluntary exits from it, as experience may show to

[1] Jeremy Taylor has considered at length this point; see *Ductor Dubitantium*, pp. 144 sq.

be wise in view of what it is possible to accomplish through law for the general good.

If we turn to the teaching of the New Testament, it would seem at first glance as though no other ground for absolute divorce could be permitted than the single one of adultery. That is the only cause mentioned in the words of Christ to the Pharisees.[1] Before we settle, however, in this conclusion, the inquiry should be carefully made whether this precept was intended as a universal commandment under all conditions of society and for all times. Is it an absolute maxim of Christian morals from which there can be no permissible deviation?

On the one hand, a strict exegesis of the Scriptural passages in which Jesus speaks of putting away a wife, seems to admit of no other construction than that adultery was the only sufficient cause which our Lord had in mind when he was laying down the law of divorce to the Jews. If we take the letter of the Scripture as a universal categorical imperative, the question must be deemed to be closed. But, on the other hand, it appears that the apostolic Church did not so understand the teaching of Christ; for St. Paul seems to admit that divorce may be justifiable on another ground, that of desertion. If an unbelieving husband should abandon a Christian wife, she would no longer be held in bondage in such a case.[2] The letter of the injunction of Jesus can therefore be urged as applicable to all social conditions only by questioning the correctness of the apparent direction which Paul gave to a church in a place where the social relations of Christians were somewhat different from those obtaining in Judea when Jesus laid down the law to the Pharisees. The difference between these two directions, Jesus' and Paul's, can be harmonized only as we reconcile many other discrepancies between precepts which we find in Christ's own teaching;

[1] Matt. v. 32; xix. 9; Mark x. 11, 12.

[2] 1 Cor. vii. 15. For the exegesis of this text see Meyer, *Com. in loco*. The natural interpretation is that the person from whom an unbelieving husband or wife has departed, is not subject longer to the obligation of a relation which has actually been broken by desertion. Whether Paul thought that the person so deserted might remarry, he has not told us.

viz. by seeking for the principle of universal validity from which under different circumstances dissimilar moral maxims proceed. The principle being the same, its applications may be various, and at times apparently contradictory. This is the case because the individual instance (to recur to Rothe's expression) varies. Jesus undoubtedly laid down an absolute ethical principle concerning the marriage relation in what he was called to say in view of the loose divorce customs of the Jews. That principle from which his precept proceeded, should be law in Christian ethics. Moreover, the particular instance which was the only one considered in Christ's declaration of the true principle of divorce, required the simplest and most unequivocal assertion of the sanctity of the obligation of marriage. For adultery, the instance considered, is the direct breach of the marriage relation. It is the one sin which immediately and unmistakably illustrates the only valid reason on which divorce, according to Christ's teaching, may be legally allowed, — the ground that the union between husband and wife has already in fact been criminally destroyed. There is no other legitimate principle for divorce than that presented by the nature of the sin of adultery. If, however, we can say with a good conscience that some other sin (some sin which possibly in Christ's day had not reached its full measure of iniquity, — a sin, for instance, like drunkenness, which may utterly destroy the spiritual unity of a home and threaten even the physical security of one of the persons bound by the vows of marriage) is the moral equivalent of the cause which our Lord had immediately before him for pronouncing divorce, shall we be justified in admitting it to be likewise a proper Christian ground of divorce?

Such is the question fairly stated upon which Christian moralists have not been entirely agreed. Our answer to it will depend very much on two considerations. The first will be our general habit of reading the New Testament as another law, or of interpreting its precepts to the best of our understanding in what we may judge to have been the spirit in which they were spoken, remembering the Master's

own saying that his words are spirit and they are life. The other consideration will be our confidence in the correctness of the premise that the special sin alleged, by which the marriage union has been violated, is the full moral equivalent of adultery. In proportion as we are satisfied that it is in its consequence as destructive of the possibility of moral continuance in the married relation, we shall be inclined to think that it is included under the supreme principle which controlled the judgment of Jesus concerning certain habits, at which Moses winked, of the easy putting away of a wife. In other words, we shall argue that divorce for such other cause justifies itself to the Christian conscience, because we are satisfied that Jesus himself, if he were present and speaking to the men of our times in the same intent and spirit in which he spoke of old, would pronounce this cause to be as heinous as adultery in its destruction of the sacredness of the marriage bond.[1] The validity of this reasoning will become further apparent when we recall the consideration already alluded to, that there are conditions, other than adultery, in which the whole ethical and spiritual truth of marriage is so destroyed that for the innocent person to continue in the married state would be abhorrent to all pure instincts, and would seem itself to be like a participation in an adulterous relation.[2]

The limits of our space prevent us from specifying in detail the duties which the different members of the family owe to each other within its happy sphere. There are no more sacred personal obligations, as there are no better opportunities for the practice of all the common virtues, than the family life affords. Selfishness is the deadly foe of the home. Married love should not be left simply to the care of nature as a feeling of attachment, but it should be cherished and cultivated as a reasonable virtue. Mutual for-

[1] Among the Puritans Ames, who wrote a treatise on *Conscience* (London, 1643), regarded "an obstinate desertion," as "a fair cause" for suffering divorce (p. 209).

[2] Dorner has urged this consideration in justification of the extension of the Christian law of divorce, *System der Christ. Sittenlehre*, s. 500.

bearance, consideration, and honor are the conditions of its happy continuance.

The words of one of the earlier English divines concerning mutual peace between man and wife will still bear quoting: "We heard before that man to his wife, and she to him, is as an haven. Now by experience we find that if the haven be tempestuous it is much more troublesome and dangerous to the mariner than the wide sea." — Wm. Gouge, *Of Domestical Duties*, p. 135 (London, 1627).

The duties of parents and children, of brothers and sisters, as well as of masters and servants, are adaptations of the law of love to these special relations and intimacies, but their detailed consideration and enforcement fall properly to homiletics and to Christian pedagogy.

§ 2. — DUTIES IN THE SPHERE OF THE STATE

From the moral constitution and vocation of the State, which we have already considered, the ethical obligations of civil life are immediately to be derived. The individual citizen is responsible, to the extent of his personal power, for the fidelity of the State to its moral law and mission.

It has been charged, however, upon Christianity as a defect, that while it makes its adherents citizens of heaven, it has not been directly concerned to make of them interested citizens of this world. What, then, is the view to be taken of political obligations by an ethics which is thoroughly true to the Spirit of Christ? Is there a sense also of political obligation in the Christian consciousness?

If we turn to the New Testament, it is plain that its political ethics were comparatively undeveloped. Jesus avoided conflict with the Roman authority, and drew a clear distinction between the obligations of the religious and the civil life. He was obedient in both spheres of duty, not withholding what was due to Cæsar while he rendered unto God the things which are God's. Yet his relation to the ruling powers of Judea was throughout one of passive acquiescence rather than of active participation in the troubled politics of Judea. Similarly the political ethics of the epistles are developed on the passive rather

than on the active side: obedience is enjoined to the powers that be as ordained of God, while the duty of contending for human rights, or of seeing that justice is done, are only inferentially to be drawn from the New Testament. Hence writers who hastily base their conclusions on the letter of Scripture, jump at the conclusion that there is no political morality to be derived from purely Christian sources, and that the whole duty of man, according to Christianity, is concentrated upon interests of the other world. They forget that the entire Old Testament ground, on which Christianity rests, was political history — the historic development of a chosen people; the Hebrew commonwealth was the divine preparation for the kingdom of the Christ. If Jesus' own saying is to be made good that he came not to destroy but to fulfil, the political truth also of Israel will in some large way be taken up into the ethics of Christianity, and the national consciousness of the Hebrew people must find fulfilments among the modern nations in the spirit of Christianity.

The apparent limitations of the political ethics of the New Testament were given in the historic conditions of Jesus' ministry, and determined by the first necessities of the work of Christ which his immediate disciples were called to continue in the world. The gospel for all nations was to be preached to the world before the political institutions of any single nation could be recast in the forms of Christianity. Had Jesus devoted himself to the removal of the political evils of Herod's court; had he been willing to enter Jerusalem, in compliance with his disciples' ambition, as the leader from heaven of a Galilean uprising; then the political star of Israel might possibly again have become ascendant, but the world would not have seen the dawn of the new day for all peoples and lands. The political duties which are mentioned incidentally in the gospels and epistles are precisely those virtues which believers at that time needed to practise, if their world-conquering faith was to gain opportunity to plant itself and to grow on the earth. God in history does not make haste; the political ethics which are inher-

ent in the morality of the gospel were left latent in the early Christian teachings until their hour in history should come.

The question fairly stated is not simply what political precepts do we read in letters of apostles which were primarily intended to meet special conditions in the primitive churches; but what, according to the spirit of Christianity, and in the matured judgments of the Christian consciousness (correcting itself always by comparison with the word of God) are our Christian civil duties?[1]

Civil obligations will vary in form, and differ in extent, according to the constitution and laws of different countries; but certain general Christian obligations may be recognized under all forms of constitutional government.

1. An intelligent interest should be taken in public affairs. Whatever concerns us collectively ought to interest us individually. Even though the politics of a country may not directly affect any private material interest, yet all political action concerns the general good, so that intelligent watchfulness of the administration of government, as well as observation of the tendencies of civil institutions, is one part of the moral obligation which each of us owes to all of us.

2. It is a duty in general to conform to existing laws. There are certain admissible exceptions, as when a law requires some personal act which would be dishonorable, or which is against a good conscience. Moreover, under some extenuating circumstances it may be held that laws which are morally indifferent, which are merely statutory prohibitions, disregard of which involves in itself no moral offence, may, for a sufficient reason, be overlooked. In such cases the citizen owes indeed a respect to formal law as law. But if he regards the prohibition as unwise or arbitrary, he may elect to show dissent from the particular statute and his regard for law in general, by submitting freely to the penalty.[2] He may thereby, if he

[1] It would be easy to adduce citations from the apostolic fathers to show that Christianity did not make the Christians bad citizens even of the Roman state which was passing away.

[2] Cf. Blackstone, *Int.* § 2 [58].

thinks best, make perhaps most effectively his individual protest against an obnoxious statute. No absolute maxim of conscience can be laid down in such cases, but in general the presumption is on the side of respect even for needless or questionable statutory enactments. A certain right, however, of the individual must be admitted to seek for the abolition or correction of a particular statute in matters of moral indifference by disregarding it, enduring the consequences, and thereby endeavoring to render an unwise law ridiculous or odious, and to secure its repeal.

3. The extent to which personal participation in politics becomes an obligation to be recognized as belonging to the Christian's duty in the world, must be determined under his general Christian obligation to enter actively into social life according to the requirements of his personal position, opportunities, and other responsibilities. While no universal maxim may be laid down, certain Christian considerations should be emphasized. The Lord's prayer for the coming of the kingdom requires of Christian men active interest in all spheres of life, and along all possible lines of effort in and by which that large and perfect human good which is the kingdom of God on earth, may be advanced. The Spirit of Christ forbids moral indifference to anything human. At great crises in a nation's history, when all the powers of a people are summoned to meet some emergency in the conflict for liberty or righteousness, patriotism may become for the hour the supreme Christian obligation. And at all times, in a free country governed by the people, political indifference on the part of the educated, or the more morally intelligent members of a community, is a source of danger and detriment to the nation. The worst enemies of free institutions may not be the corrupt, or the insectivorous politicians who swarm around the spoils of office, but rather the indifferent good, who do not care what happens in the political hive so long as their own private interests are not disturbed.

The maintenance of a vigilant, intelligent public spirit is one of the first of our political obligations, from having

part in which no good citizen should deem himself excused. The limits of the obligation of the individual in this duty are to be found only in the limits of his position, opportunity, and power. And in proportion as one has a Christian sense of human life as a whole, all the parts and activities and duties of which are mutually related and inter-dependent, will he realize his obligation of discharging to the full the duties of good citizenship, of forming correct opinions on public questions, of taking a position in accordance with his best political judgment, of letting his political convictions be known in all proper ways, of exercising always his right as a voter; in short, of counting according to his full measure as a man in the politics of his country.

Professional ethics may determine the manner or times in which different individuals may take part, or manifest their convictions in political affairs. A physician might not find a proper arena for political discussion in the sick-room, or the clergyman, except under circumstances of peculiar moral gravity, discuss questions of party politics in the pulpit; but no profession, and least of all the profession of a scholar or of a religious teacher, should be deemed so sacred as to take a man out of the general interests of humanity, and excuse him to his own conscience, or in the eyes of others, from the obligations which rest upon him as a man and a responsible member of the community. Even if the duties of the heavenly citizenship be regarded as of a superior order and incomparably above any claims of this present system of the world, nevertheless the Scripture here is to the point, that he that is faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in that which is much; the future interests of man are not to be served by neglect or contempt of any of his present obligations.

4. Special obligations rest on those who are called to bear part in the affairs of government and in the execution of the laws. The duties of the law-maker, the judge, the advocate, the officer of the courts, would require each its chapter, in a book of special ethics, for their full statement. In Christian ethics this general principle should be brought

to clear recognition: in all these special relations and activities their obligations are to be assumed and discharged in the Spirit of Christ.

The moral obligations of politics are concentrated in the duty which is owed by a leader of public opinion; and genuine statesmanship will be profoundly ethical in its political comprehension and fidelity. The true statesman is he who reasons as Mr. Lowell says Dante's opinions "were reasoned out from the astronomic laws of history and ethics, and were not weather-guesses snatched in a glance at the doubtful political sky of the hour.

> "Swiftly the politic goes: is it dark? he borrows a lantern;
> Slowly the statesman and sure, guiding his feet by the stars."[1]

The instinct to discover the deeper moral involutions of current political questions is a power of great ethical value. It is a faculty of politico-ethical conscience to be cultivated and kept clear and keen through exercise. And it is never wise nor safe for the Christian mind to give over any political question or social law entirely to the conflict of party interests; the ethics of it, the ethical implications and possible ethical reactions of all current questions of government or administration, will bear constant watching. These moral contents of proposed policies and laws sometimes lie on the surface;—as the enactment of a law of international copyright in the United States was an application in public morality of the commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." Sometimes these moral relations of politics lie beneath the surface of legislation, or are remote possibilities of the policies of states. It is a fair question, for example, from the ethical point of view, what are the moral relations of a system of tariff legislation, or of laws relating to trusts, or of different charters of municipal corporations? So far as these ethical elements of political institutions, or laws, can be distinguished and made apparent, their consideration becomes a part of the political obligation of the Christian man. No party interest should be suffered to obscure these moral relations and possible

[1] *Works*, vol. iv. p. 179.

ethical consequences of political action. Indeed, to rise above the immediate claims of party to the level of the moral view of any current political question, may at times be the first duty of the Christian man to the State, — an obligation of the higher law in his politics which he is to discharge in the fear of God, and as a part of his repetition of the Lord's prayer, Thy Kingdom come.

§ 3. — DUTIES IN THE CHURCH

We have seen that the Church of God in its divine idea and intention is an institute of religion for humanity. Ideally the Church belongs to man. The obligation of men to the Church follows directly from its nature as a universal human good. Because it belongs to man, men should belong to it. Theoretically all men are to be regarded as included in the Church of God for humanity. Nor can any individual altogether avoid interest and participation in the Church for man, wherever it exists in the name of Christ. For it will confer certain general benefits on him through its presence in our world, whatever may be his individual position towards it. The Church is a good for all men, although individually they may not have entered into free and conscious participation in it. What God does, he does for all; his sky is for the whole world; his redemption is a redemption for the human race; his Church extends its influence around the whole compass of human activities, and sheds light and love on some who do not own its blessing. Only in this conception of the Church as belonging in Christ's name to humanity, can the obligation of all men to be members of the Church be maintained. Any narrower idea of the Church circumscribes with a corresponding limitation the duty of men to be found within the Church. Because it is a human good, and is no exclusive privilege of an elect class, its gospel may be preached throughout the whole world, and its claims pressed on all men.

In no narrower conception of his kingdom than this did Jesus meet men when he lived on earth. Christ's thought

was always broader than his disciples' idea of the kingdom of God. And the Spirit of Christianity has always gone beyond the practice of the Church. All who are heavy laden are called by Jesus, and every man who wills, is chosen. Whoever the Lord saw gathering with him, and not scattering, he was ready to own. He could forgive with a noble self-forgetfulness any word spoken against the Son of man, if only men would not sin against the very Spirit of Truth and Love, for only such sin against the Holy Ghost is from its nature hopeless.[1] Moreover, Jesus in his approach to men would put aside all limitation of class or condition and speak directly to the human heart and conscience. Through the voice of Jesus, God spoke to the man in men. The healing touch of the Christ is for the human nature of us all. Hence all men sought for him; and, when the Holy Ghost was given in his name, his gospel broke loose from Judaic bounds, went forth to the Gentiles, found a home in many cities, and was to be preached among all the nations. The Church is called and should be inspired to represent the universality of its Christ. It can regard no man as an exception from its privilege of grace, its obligation of service. It stands in the midst of the community as a sign of the kingdom of heaven for all passers by. It invites whoever will to partake of God's blessing. No one by birth or inheritance is without its pale of salvation.

1. Theoretically, therefore, the first duty which Christian ethics urges as the general human obligation towards the Church is this: every man should regard himself, by right of his birth into a world which has Christ in it, as having his place in the Church of Christ for humanity, and as under obligation to make good in his personal conduct his human birthright into God's kingdom for men. When, however, this duty is admitted in the abstract, the practical discharge of it, under existing conditions of Christianity, becomes a different and to some men a perplexing question. The hesitancy of many intelligent and honorable men in confessing themselves to be members of

[1] Matt. xii. 31–32.

the Church, arises from several causes. It is true that the Church does not in any existing ecclesiastical body present itself simply as the general religious order of humanity, or as a social institution of religion which men are to acknowledge as representing the general religious nature and needs of man. In other words, the Church does not now present itself to men on the religious side in the same manner that the State presents itself to them on the social side as the form of organized life under which they have been born, and the only practicable order of social organization in which their lives with those of their fellow-men may be cast. The Roman religion held this relation to men, and all Roman citizens were members of the Roman State-Church. If the Christian Church simply offered itself as the best practicable method for the organization of the social religious life of men, there would be little difficulty in regarding one's self as having birthright in it, and living in general conformity to its order. The obligation to the Church would in that case resolve itself into a general duty of living in harmony with the prevailing social religious order, and of becoming in one's conduct more or less religiously disposed.

The Christian Church, however, while asserting in the name of the Son of man that it is a universal human order and belongs as such to humanity, proceeds to make further and specific demands both upon the beliefs and the characters of individuals whose personal allegiance it requires. It does not offer its citizenship simply as a Christian birthright, but also as a duty to be assumed with a personal faith in its truth, and in a free self-surrender to its supreme law of life.

The obligation of men to the Church is further complicated by the division of Christendom into many churches, each making its particular claims of authority, or asserting its own conditions of communion. The Church speaks not with one simple and clear voice, but with many and confused voices, in urging its obligations upon men. There seems to be no exact agreement concerning what is indispensable to the reception of the sacraments, and to personal

fellowship in the communion of the Church. Matters which are deemed of essential importance by one body of believers are ignored by others. Some insist on much belief, others reduce the Christian creed to the simplest elements of a religious faith. Some look for obvious signs of a radical change of character; others open the Christian home to all who show any desire to enter in. If we admit that all these different churches belong to the one true Church, men may ask whether membership in any one of these imperfect and even opposing forms of Church organization, is indispensable to belonging in the spirit to the Church of the Spirit of Christ, — whether indeed Jesus himself, should he now appear on the earth and go about doing good as of old, would be careful to identify himself closely with any existing ecclesiastical organization? Or would he enter in every place into all the churches, and confess his faith in his Father and ours wherever he found men breaking bread in his name?

To this latter part of the perplexity this much may at once be said: the Church of Christ is in its integral idea not simply a spiritual communion, but a visible showing of the Lord Jesus until he comes; therefore the whole duty of men towards the Church is not fulfilled when they hold themselves apart from any outward and evident communion with the disciples, and seek to live Christ's life in secret fellowship with the Spirit. Grant that all existing forms of ecclesiastical organization may be imperfect and mixed with error; still the Church in its idea is not simply spiritual and invisible, but it is to have the Spirit of Christ in some embodiment; the Church is the body of Christ; and consequently it is the duty of believers not only to pray for the gifts of the Spirit, but to put themselves in the appointed channels through which spiritual gifts descend to men, — to be not only spiritually minded, but to be members in particular of the body of Christ. Admit that membership in some visible church is not necessary to salvation; that the utmost borders of the Church do not reach to the ends of the divine grace and include the whole compass of God's redemption of men; still a religious

life which is not brought under the order and kept in the communion of some church is like a nomadic existence without the borders of organized society. Grant that one may overleap in his personal devotion all walls of sect, and, as on spiritual wings, might fly directly into the kingdom of heaven; nevertheless, each church is an open gate through which men may enter in companies into the kingdom; through some hospitable door we may come in, and we should dwell with other children of God in the house of the Lord.

The general obligation of belonging to the Church of God for humanity reduces itself accordingly to these narrower and more definite inquiries: Is there any open door through which I may find my way into the visible kingdom? Are all ways closed to one of my beliefs or purposes? Through what particular one of these doors ought I to find my way in? Am I claiming my full Christian birthright of humanity unless I find, or insist on having opened to me, some Christian communion? Such obligation of the individual to find entrance somewhere into Christ's Church carries with it also the obligation of the churches to meet men in their rights to the Church, and not to close the door of entrance against any whom the spirit of the Christian household of faith should receive.

Keeping both sides of this obligation in mind, the human right and personal duty of men to be in the Church, and also the obligation of the Church to all men, we turn first to the New Testament for further light with regard to the conditions, if any, of fellowship with Christ's followers in his Church.

The two requirements which Jesus made of those who would be his disciples are expressed in these words, which usually go together in the gospels, Repent and believe. We may trust our Lord to have put into his repeated invitation to men to become his followers all that is necessary as a condition of companionship with him in God's way of life. These two fundamental words have direct reference to character. For to repent is to make

thorough moral work with one's self; and to believe, in the sense which this word bears in Christ's use of it, is to trust him with a personal devotion, and such trust is a moral attachment of a man's soul to the Master. A sincere act of turning from sin and a personal attachment to him, were thus the first conditions of discipleship which our Lord required.

It is true that there were intellectual apprehensions of Christ in such faith. Something from the intellect must enter into any disposition of the heart. No ethical choice can be made without some exercise of the reason; — this is only saying that the will was not made to act in an entire intellectual vacuum. It is obvious that even in the simple personal requirements which Jesus made of his disciples there were involved certain intellectual affirmations. Their trust implied at least a perception of the trustworthiness of the Teacher who knew the Father and was sure of his God. Faith in Christ springs from some conviction of his worthiness to be our Master. But this simple confession of personal discipleship, among those who followed Jesus, was not the later theology of the Epistle to the Romans, or even that fuller apprehension of the Christ which Peter had gained when he went forth preaching the gospel of the risen Lord. From this original personal trust and confidence in Jesus as Master and Lord, a new Christian theology was sure in time to grow in the philosophic atmosphere of Grecian thought. The Nicene creed is a rational development of the faith of the apostolic Church; but the Lord's gracious invitation was not to a confession of the faith of the one Catholic Church, — it was spoken to the hearts of men in these simplest words of clear moral import, Repent, and, Believe me.

Are men to hold themselves aloof from Christ's visible following until they can attain a more definite and longer Christian creed than the first disciples of Jesus of Nazareth found sufficient to warrant them in leaving all to follow him? Or may the Church, in this later dispensation of Christ's spiritual presence and teaching, require more belief than Jesus asked when he began to draw all men unto

himself? It may be admitted as unquestionable that the Church to which has been promised the gift of the Spirit, ought to educate men into clearer and fuller beliefs concerning Christ's person and work than the Galilean disciples at first could have gained. It may be urged that a simple creed for Christian beginners is not creed enough for Christian men of mature understanding of God's Word. The Church may meet men with easiest truths of divinity and attract them to itself in the name of the prophet from Galilee; but the men whom it wins to Jesus, it should carry on, through the lessons of his life and death, to Pentecost and the glorious apostolic doctrine of the crucified and risen Lord.

Admitting this educational duty of the Church under its guidance by the Spirit of Truth, still it is not easy to see why the Church should ask more of men in the Christian call to discipleship than Jesus himself sought, when he came preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God and saying, Repent and believe. The universal intent of the Church as a blessing belonging by Heaven's decree to all men, should serve as a perpetual injunction upon human devices or forms which narrow or limit its divine design. When we look solely at what may be imposed as an indispensable condition of fellowship with Christ in the visible Church, we may not go one step beyond the Lord's own requirements of discipleship.

It may be said, however, and with some reasonableness, that certain conditions of communion in the Church, which are not deemed essential, may be added for the sake of order and harmony; and, while these should not be absolutely imposed, believers may be urged freely to consent to them. So almost all existing churches add precepts of ecclesiastical order, or formulas for doctrinal harmony and soundness, to the simplest conditions of following Christ. The peril, however, of excluding some whom Christ would own by restrictions which are intended to make the fold safer for those who are brought into it, is not inconsiderable; it may be a great danger in times of intellectual questioning. Precedents or proprieties of ecclesiastical

order, and expediencies of general rules, ought not to be maintained to the injury of an individual's right to the Church of Christ in some company of disciples, or to the exclusion of any who might be led to larger and more pronounced Christian life by a return of the whole body of believers for his sake to the simplicity of Christ. It should never be forgotten in the administration of the churches that it is the Church of the Son of man, and not ours, nor our fathers' Church. Moreover, it is within the Church, and not without it, that we are to find the best place in the world to study all truth, to work out our doubts, to grow in our beliefs. We should seek to bring all things human into the Church for help and enlightenment, and to exclude only things evil. It is a fatal blunder to compel any doubter to go off from the communion of the Christ in search of truth. All investigation belongs within the society of Him who is the truth. Galileo with his telescope has as divine right in the Church as the priest with his missal. Men should be invited to bring their questionings to the light of Christ; and only the man who will not be led by the Spirit of Truth excludes himself necessarily from those who are called by Christ's name.

Such being, then, the general obligation on the side of the Church to keep itself open to all men who will come ethically to the Christ and be mastered by his Spirit, the duty of the individual towards the Church will be correspondingly plain and direct.

It is an obligation of social religion resting, as we have just observed, on a simple condition of faith and character. And this kind or degree of character and faith may itself be pressed as an intellectual and moral obligation. It is the office of the preaching of the gospel to present Christ as our Master and Lord. It is the duty of every man to examine himself and to see whether he does not have, or is not under rational obligation to gain in himself, such a beginning of Christian trust and purpose as will justify him in seeking to confess it in the fellowship of the disciples, and, because so justifying him, render it likewise his first social religious duty to confess it. He should be

avowedly where his real purpose would leave him. He should appear openly in the communion where his heart belongs.

This duty can be fulfilled only in an act of religious decision. But the decision necessary for this step in uniting with Christ's Church is not to be confounded with other acts of religious conduct which may naturally follow it; and it should not be postponed until other attainments of religious faith are gained which may be expected as its natural spiritual consequences.

We have thus been considering this obligation of men to the Church in its religious-ethical elements rather than in its theological relations. In relation to God and the work of his Spirit the discharge of this primary human obligation to the Church may put a soul under regenerative influences that will change and quicken it to new life. All those intimate and profound religious experiences which men have passed through in the processes of regeneration are the immediate work of God in and with the soul that keeps itself freely in the way of God's renewing grace; but the first duty of throwing one's self into the current of spiritual influence is not dependent on any of those gracious experiences which may accompany or result from that absolute self-committal to God.

The Church, it is true, would suffer loss and shame should it be filled with unregenerate souls; but the surest and safest way of causing the Church to abound in truly regenerate life is not to apply too anxiously selected tests of spiritual experience to those who would receive the cup of the Christ, but rather to welcome with helpful and hopeful charity those who would seek to do the truth of Christ. We can judge what is ethically Christian with truer discernment than we can what is spiritually pure and rich unto God. The former, when it exists, usually proves also to be the latter. The tree is known by its fruits. The fruit of the Spirit which the apostle commends has a decided ethical color and ripeness.[1] Insistence on that which is known to be ethically Christian is a sure way of conserving also the spiritual regenerateness of the Church.

2. A second class of duties of men towards the Church

[1] Gal. v. 22, 23.

comprises those further obligations which should be recognized after they are in the Church. They relate to the Church itself, and its obligation to the world without.

These duties within the Church are primarily the obligations of fellow-learners of Christ and fellow-helpers to the truth. They are first the duty of loyalty to the whole Church — the one holy and catholic Church to which, whatever one's particular communion, he belongs and owes supreme allegiance; and next, those more special and immediate duties which are to be fulfilled in the particular church, or local body of believers, with whom one is joined in direct covenant relation under common responsibilities of Christian service.

The duties of those within the Church relate also to their faithful personal use and maintenance of the means of grace, to the special Christian works which may be gathered around their local church, and to their participation likewise in the whole missionary endeavor of Christ's Church. To communicants are offered as means of grace in Christ's name the several offices of healings, helps, governments which the Church has instituted, — such as the preaching of the word, the house of prayer, the public services of the sanctuary, and, at the centre and hearth of all ministries, the sacrament of the Lord's supper. It is the dutiful privilege of the believer to avail himself of these regular means of grace, and to do his full part in sustaining them for the use of others. Regular attendance upon the house of God and reception of the sacrament are indispensable aids to growth in grace, and neglect of these ordinances indicates a lowering of the Christian tone and is usually followed by loss of spiritual vigor and health. Other means of self-culture and of religious nourishment, however attractive, cannot take the place of the public services of the Church; — for the Christian life is not a private or merely personal communion with God, but it is essentially a communion of believers with the Lord; and the law of Christian knowledge is given in that apostolic prayer that "with all the saints" we may know the love

of Christ. The true Church is Jesus himself in the midst of his disciples; and we must be among the disciples to be most truly and fully present with the Lord. The obligation of public worship springs directly from the nature of the gospel as the power of social salvation. We can receive the highest gifts of God's Spirit, as we can receive the best gifts of nature — the sunshine, the invigorating breeze, the joy of the creation, — only as we share them with others.

We owe also in the Church especial duties of helpfulness and care to others who are of the same household of faith. The Church, as we have already observed, is intended to be a foreshadowing of the perfection of human society which shall be fulfilled in the kingdom of heaven. Consequently this prophetic nature of the Church as a sign of the coming of the kingdom of heaven, requires of its members a closer walk and fellowship, a kindlier charity and a more watchful sympathy especially in the household of the faith,[1] than is to be found in the world. It is the duty of all the members of a church so to live toward one another as to show to the world some anticipatory example of what human society, when it shall be wholly redeemed, will be like. It is the privilege and high calling of the Church of Christ in the world to become a type of the true kind of society. The obligation therefore of mutual forbearance, helpfulness, and sympathy within the Church, is not simply the general duty of benevolence, or the accentuation through Christian motives of the common obligation of friendliness; it is not simply a virtue of sociableness which may contribute to other aims of the Church; rather is it the obligation of showing an essential truth of Christianity to the world. This conception of the social life of the Church as an integral part of its Christianity dignifies and exalts it, gives it breadth and meaning beyond the desire merely of gratifying the natural social impulses. Hence the paramount obligation of the Church to be a typical society cannot be discharged simply by the enrichment of individual friendships or the enlargement

[1] Gal. vi. 10.

of personal acquaintance through the fellowships which may be formed within the Church; but the social aim of the Church is to be realized through a communion of rich and poor, of learned and unlearned, of all classes and conditions of men in a common life, a mutual sympathy, and a single purpose and hope. Rightly conceived nothing can be nobler or worthier than this Christian idea of the communion of believers in the Church of Christ. To it is intrusted the Christian ideal of society, so far as that ideal may succeed in finding visible realization in a sinful world. Anything therefore in the Church which dwarfs or mars this Christian type of the true society, is to be cast out as of this world, and not of the Spirit of the Christ. Whatever may help bring out this Christian idea of society in a church, and give it practical embodiment and visibility, is to be regarded as of essential importance, and as laying therefore an obligation on all the members of the household of faith.

3. The missionary obligation constitutes the third duty of the Church which is incumbent upon its members.

This supreme obligation of the witnessing Church has had noble recognition in former ages of faith, although it has not found fitting place in the definitions of the idea of the Church. Our century is by no means the first to know the joy of missionary devotion; yet it is the crowning glory of our Christian age to inscribe on its banners the Lord's commandment of discipling all nations. The idea of a consecrated and a universal service distinctively characterizes the nineteenth century conception of the nature and the aims of the Church. And the first and essential principle of Christian virtue is the source and power of the missionary obligation: "For the love of Christ constraineth us."[1]

§ 4. — DUTIES WITHIN THE INDETERMINATE SOCIAL SPHERES

In this class of duties will be comprised the obligations which grow out of the associations of men in those voluntary pursuits, aims, and industrial relations which bind

[1] 2 Cor. v. 14.

them together temporarily, or with more enduring ties of friendship and mutual concern.

Under this head descriptive ethics would characterize the specific duties of the school, the workshop, the social circle, the business, the profession. The duties of these social relations are the specialized forms of the general Christian obligation to live with a good conscience and from the highest motive of love.

Passing by further description of the duties to be fulfilled in several of these particular social groupings, we notice certain Christian obligations which need emphasis in three of these spheres.

1. There is a Christian conscience to be followed in our friendships.

The purest and sweetest pages of ancient literature are those devoted to friendship, and filled with its aroma. Christian ethics consecrates the love of friends with a more than earthly promise. The broken friendships of this earth are bound up in the hope of a heavenly completion. Jesus' friendship with his disciples was for two worlds, — a companionship of the Son of man while he walked with them on this earth, and also a communion with Christ in the last supper, as they kept it in remembrance of Him, and in the hope, likewise, that after a little while He should see them again, and drink the fruit of the vine new with them in the Father's kingdom.[1] Hence all the obligations as well as delights of friendship will be purified, exalted, and intensified by Christian faith. To the Christian conscience the duties of friendship become doubly sacred because it has the promise of this life and of the world-ages to come. Honorableness, kindness, forbearance, loyalty, the charity that thinketh no evil, — these are Christian virtues which must enter into the very life and happiness of friendship; and with these graces some touch also of that idealizing virtue of the Christian imagination, which has power to represent the characters of others not merely in their present faults and rudenesses, but also in something of their future Christian triumph

[1] Matt. xxvi. 29.

and perfection, as they shall be changed "from glory to glory even from the Lord, the Spirit."[1]

2. There is a Christian industrial conscience to be cultivated.

Conscience in work is an old-fashioned industrial virtue which no socialistic promise can ever render antiquated. Faithfulness in all the services which men are to render to one another is absolutely required by the law of Christian society. A good industrial conscience, therefore, in all labor, and in the discharge of economic responsibilities, needs to be preached alike in workshop and office as essential truth of any hopeful social gospel.

The particular duties which a sound industrial conscience will recognize are not to be put into abstract formulas; they are to be the true judgments by the Christian man, in each individual instance, of the custom of the trade, or the transaction of the market with which he has to do. And a large part of the moral education of life will consist in learning how to keep the moral integrity, to do justice, and to act righteously, in these ever recurring perplexities of a man's business relations. Quick moral discernment, and often courage in business, are required in order to observe the apostolic precept not to be partaker of other men's sins.[2] Certain general maxims only may be derived from experience for the guidance of the industrial conscience. Thus the choice of a business should itself be a matter of moral, as well as financial consideration. An occupation of doubtful moral expediency should be avoided. A calling which will subject one to almost certain lapse from a plane of honorable conduct, should be deemed a temptation. Or even though a business may present itself which, it is conceivable, another might pursue without moral loss, if it is liable to produce a moral strain on some portion of an individual's nature where he feels himself to be personally weak, and his virtue is liable to break, such a calling should be refused as one morally unsuited and wrong for him. Caution also needs to be exercised by the Christian

[1] 2 Cor. iii. 18. [2] 1 Tim. v. 22.

man especially with regard to the corporate relations in which he allows himself to become involved. For the questions which affect men's consciences in their corporate capacity, are beginning to constitute a distinct and considerable part of modern casuistry. Many doubtful modern cases of conscience, so called, (which the older casuists were not called to debate,) arise from questions of the nature and degree of one's individual responsibility in corporate relations. The first general duty for the Christian man in this matter is to avoid becoming a member of any corporation whose business he can foresee will inevitably involve him personally in transactions which he cannot approve, and which he thinks ought not to be allowed. Nor does there seem to be any doubt that a good corporate conscience should lead one to act, speak, and vote in any proposed transaction as the possessor of it would do, were he solely responsible for the business in which he is engaged. One cannot hide himself entirely in silence and inaction from a morally reprehensible transaction on the ground that the soulless corporation, of which he is a member, is responsible for it. So far as a Christian man is a member of a corporation, that corporation ought to have a soul.

But does a difference of moral judgment as to any act, or business method of a corporation, necessarily require that the dissenting member shall sell out, perhaps at a great sacrifice? or that, on every occasion of difference of moral judgment, he shall make his dissent known outside as well as within the corporation?

Other interests are here to be considered; other obligations may become paramount. A man may hold in a corporation an interest which he is under no little obligation to maintain and defend. He may hold it in trust for others. By remaining as a dissenting member of a corporation he may protect the interests of other shareholders, and possibly in time save the corporation itself from questionable methods. The general ethical maxim must admit, in these instances of moral perplexity, a certain scope and space for the adjustment of conflicting claims;

it can only dictate in general that the resultant action should be clear and straightforward so far as the individual is concerned; whether the protest against evil within the corporation is enough, or whether remaining in ineffectual protest against evil involves personal complicity in it, are moral questions to be decided in each individual instance. If the latter supposition grows clear, the duty of cutting loose at any cost from the evil will become plain.

A good industrial conscience will be on its guard against all transactions which involve a change of property without value received. Betting and gambling are demoralizing because they violate the first economic principle of value in exchange. Speculation is competition run wild. In all transactions where there is gain without compensation, competition without co-operation, the true social law of exchange is violated; the Christian ethics of business is mutual service in labor and mutual benefit in exchange. A discussion of the relation of speculation to morals may be found in President Hopkins's volume on *The Law of Love*, pp. 188 seq.; and also in President Porter's *Elements of Moral Science*, pp. 355 seq. The earlier Puritan view of games of hazard may be learned from Perkins's *Cases of Conscience.* He distinguishes between "games of wit and industry," which he thinks are "very commendable," and "games of hazard, and a mixture of both." The latter class of mixed games, partly of hazard and partly of wit, like cards, Perkins admits may be used, though "very sparingly." But he condemns games of mere hazard because they are an irreligious use of the lot, and because "they are not recreations, but rather matter of stirring up troublesome passions, as fear, sorrow, etc., and so they distemper body and mind," and also because "covetousness is commonly the ground of them all" (pp. 346, 347).

The Christian industrial conscience will also be concerned with those mutual obligations between men which arise from the existence of social classes, and from the industrial differentiations of the modern world. The obligations of capitalists and contractors, of employers and employees, of different trades to one another, of masters and servants, — all present distinct kinds and combinations of virtues and duties which a good industrial and communal conscience will be quick to discern. The Christian principle of social differentiation is that we are members one of another.[1] Humanity is one body in Christ. Running through and through and around all industrial and

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 12–27.

economic relations, the Spirit of Christianity owns and emphasizes the common human fellowship in which all classes and conditions of men exist. For ten or more hours each week-day men may hold towards each other economic relations as wage-givers and wage-receivers, as employers and employed. For the remainder of each twenty-four hours men stand related to each other simply and solely as men. For the working parts of six days men may be bound together in their industries by the laws of economics; for one day in seven men in general have no industrial claims upon one another. On the Sabbath day the State intervenes with its power to protect the weakest factory girl from the clatter of machinery; mammon loosens its grasp on the pulses of human life, and men may live towards one another as children of the same Father in heaven. This larger human relation was before, and is after, and circumscribes all lesser, accidental, and temporary economic relations of men. This common humanity should not indeed be lost sight of in the midst of the economies of manufacture and trade; it is not to be excluded altogether from the workshop, nor at any time to be wholly forgotten between employer and employed; but it should be openly owned, honored, and cherished as men meet outside of their industrial relations in the pursuit and enjoyment of the common aims of human existence. Christianity insists with a perpetual insistence upon the respect and reverence for the humanity of men. Human beings are not created as prime numbers towards one another without kindred interests, which are as the common divisors of their lives.

There are two persons in the community whose calling it is to trace through men's lives these common factors of humanity, — the physician, who follows the same course of human weakness and suffering among the rich and the poor, and who is familiar with the dread powers before which we all are mortal; and the pastor, who finds the same elements of humanity from house to house; who reads the same old, human story of love and troth in the vows spoken under the costliest wedding bell, or taken by

the light of the humblest hearth, where a strong arm and a true heart begin once more to make together a hopeful home; who prays before the same human mourning and sorrow in the heart of the poor woman who must give her first-born to the death-angel of God, while her husband can hardly stop long enough from his work to brush with his sleeve the tear from his eye; and also in the silent mansion where father and mother would give all that they have, could they see again between them the little child whose angel-spirit now beholds the face of its Father in heaven. And to one who has thus followed these strong, elastic, all-embracing lines of humanity, in which the Creator has bound together the lives of men and of women, the artificial distinctions of life appear but glitter and gauze; and even the hum of our industries and the din of the market-place become as distant sounds — but echoes of a passing strife — to him whose heart is filled with these sweet and solemn and most human voices, in whose song and supplication all men's joys and sorrows seem to be blended in one prayer of humanity to the Father.

With such humanities the economist, as an economist, may have nothing directly to do. It is his business with scientific coolness to calculate the value of utilities under the operation of the common motives of men; but with these humanities every man at his work, and still more in his mingling with men out of his working hours, has in the sight of God very much to do. No man in his accidental and temporal position of service or of authority can escape these essential and eternal obligations of humanity. The ethics of the Son of man keeps these highest social utilities first and foremost in the thoughts and the endeavors of the children of the Father.[1]

3. There is also a professional conscience to be regarded. Certain special social duties may be conveniently grouped under the ethics of the different callings and professions.

(1) The educated man is under special obligations to the community. It has been happily said that the scholar

[1] We can determine the industrial duties more definitely after discussing in the next chapter the present social problem.

has received the people's oil, and it is his duty to return it in light. All the common social obligations rest with a peculiar force on the educated man. He can appreciate the social need; he has resources of knowledge from which to bring guidance for the life of the people. He has trained intelligence to be consecrated to the service of men. That is now true of the republic of letters which was once said by a Rabbi of the mission of the Jewish people, — it is "a nation of teachers, for mankind."

(2) Each profession and calling, besides the common obligations of educated men, has its own ethical type and laws to maintain. The three learned professions, law, medicine, and divinity, have their special rules of professional conduct which it is deemed dishonorable to disregard. These professional codes have arisen through more or less happy adaptations of the general human virtues to the requirements of particular callings; they may be regarded as the evolution of particular varieties of character in response to special modifications of environment. They are not usually fixed and permanent, but are always in the process of further modification in adaptation to changing conditions; professional ethics constitute mutable ethical varieties rather than permanent species of moral development. Yet as varieties they may become quite distinctly marked. A necessary duty of one entering into these professions is to familiarize himself with the special moral requirements of his chosen profession. Its dignity is to be maintained; its welfare is to be studied; its honor is to be kept. Professional ethics comprise certain duties which are regarded as due other members of the same profession, and also the maintenance of a good *esprit de corps*, an honorable regard for the interests of the profession, and willing service in it as a calling distinct from others in the world. The observance of professional etiquette, and a high and constant sense of professional honor, are much needed virtues; habitual disregard of these special obligations justly exposes the person who thus proves himself unworthy of his profession to expulsion from its ranks and the loss of its privileges.

The heart of professional ethics is really the golden rule; most of those customs and maxims which make up the professional code (so far as they are justifiable) are applications, which have been approved by experience, of the principle of doing unto others in the same profession as men in their own professional relations would have others do unto them.

Such codes, it is true, may be carried to an unreasonable extent, and the interest of a class may be sometimes protected and served beyond the interest of society. Then the larger group and its good may give law to the lesser group and its welfare. The professional code may receive modification from the assertion of the public interest. If, for example, those already in a trade or a profession should impose unreasonable and excessive restrictions upon the admission of others to their circle, and thereby prevent useful competition, public sentiment, and legislation, if necessary, may justly intervene to rebuke and to restrain the presumption of a class.

The special ethics of particular organizations of men and combinations of classes for the promotion of their own interest, will require in the future more intelligent and thorough discussion. The ethics of Trades Unions and the ethics of Trusts, in short, the methods morally allowable in advancing class-interests, need to be held up to the light of the supreme Christian principles of social well-being. On the one hand, if duties towards self, and especially the obligation of the largest possible self-development be granted, it cannot be denied that men may combine for self-advancement. Trades Unions and also Trusts must be admitted as morally allowable, so far as their object is the maintenance of rights and the advancement of interests which are common to a given number or to a definite class of men. The principle, however, of self-interest, whether the self be an individual or a corporate self, or the larger self of some social group, can be permitted to work only under the law of mutual service for the welfare of the whole social body. Any methods, therefore, of the strife of labor, or of the aggrandizement of capital, which promote the economic interest of a class to the detriment of all the rest of us, do violence to the first law of organic well-being, and are to be resisted for the public good. The law of mutual benefit is the supreme law of Christian association.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOCIAL PROBLEM AND CHRISTIAN DUTIES

In the preceding chapter we have considered the second class of duties both in their general character and in the chief spheres of their obligation. The claims of labor, however, present distinct social questions which are of the greatest moral moment; and in modern Christian ethics, therefore, a special chapter should be devoted to a discussion of social duties in view of existing industrial conditions.

There has always been a labor question since the day when Adam and Eve were obliged to make clothes for themselves, and to work in order to support themselves and their children. There always will be an industrial problem until paradise shall be regained. Whenever two or more individuals are thrown together and must live in the same locality, the social question will arise, How shall they possess themselves of the means of life without destroying one another in gaining and using them? How shall they bring their lives to the utmost possible mutual efficiency? This may be a comparatively simple question for a single family, or for a nomadic tribe, or for a community which has possessed itself of a common field large enough for its own sustenance, and which is strong enough to prevent any other tribe from dispossessing it. It becomes a complicated question for a crowded city at the centre of a network of communications with the whole world. The present urgency of these problems is the natural consequence of a high and complex social development, with its fine differentiations of social structure. and the greatly multiplied functions that must be harmonized in the efficient maintenance of the social body.

Our industrial questions, although in some aspects ominous, are to be regarded as signs of promise, because they are thus directly occasioned by the growth of society and are demands for organic social adaptations to still more complex conditions of human life. The study of our social problems, instead of being the "dismal science" of economics, has become the profoundly interesting science of the laws and processes of social development.

The first thing always needing to be done in order that felt evils may be removed, is to localize those evils, — to observe what social functions are involved, and to discover, so far as possible, their ultimate causes. An evil which may be seen to be an incident of, or a more or less preventable reaction from, a salutary process of social differentiation and growth, is a very different thing from an evil that may be symptomatic of some deeper constitutional disorder, which the social system must cast out to prevent universal dissolution. While the poet and prophet of the better world-age to come will always have their mission from God to comfort the heart of the people and to inspire the chosen servants of the social ideal with undying hope ; still, a first necessity of reform, an indispensable prerequisite of political progress, is the science of sociology, with its painstaking inductions, and its careful classifications of the social structure, organs, and functions.

I. THE EXISTING SOCIAL PROBLEM

1. We may clear this matter from many confusions by applying first the method of exclusion, and observing in what our social problem does *not* essentially consist.

(1) It is not simply the prevalence of much social discontent. A rapid increase of such dissatisfaction in any large class of men betrays indeed the existence of much friction and waste at some points of the industrial mechanism ; and such wear and heat, even at seemingly unimportant points, may indicate something wrong that must be made right, or the whole productive power may be brought to a disastrous stop.

But social discontent is no new phenomenon; and the real causes which produce it may not be the evils of which complaint is most loudly made. Distress in any social organ or function is a symptom of disorder which will not escape the notice of the social student; but there are pains of birth and growth as well as of death; and the present restlessness and discontent which pervade large classes of men, are not altogether unhealthy or unpromising indications.

(2) The social problem is not comprehended when we refer to the existence of a great amount of poverty.

It is not merely a question how many poor, more or less, we may have with us in this age of machinery; for our social problem would be still far from solution although a sufficient distribution of the products could be secured to give all men enough bread to eat. It may be argued, with tables of statistics for evidence, that the wealth of nations is shared by a greater number of persons than ever before, and that wage-earners have more things, and, what is still more to the point, are less exposed to violent fluctuations of the bread-market in this capitalistic era than has been the case under any previous industrial conditions. But the social difficulty is not met by these considerations, for it is not a question merely of the better supply for the once necessary wants of labor, but it is the larger problem of new wants among whole classes of the community.

(3) Neither is the social problem to be confounded with any question that may arise concerning the utility of some particular method of our present industrial economy. No mistake is more common among writers on these subjects than to assume that some method of industry, or some function of social life, is the characteristic and constitutive feature of the existing social organization, to which may be attributed, as the sole cause, almost all the ills to which the social body has fallen heir. Competition, for example, is one method, yet not by any means the sole method of the existing industrial system; combination is another method; state ownership of some of the means of communication and circulation also characterizes the exist-

ing economy. It is a short way of controversy to ascribe to a single method evils or benefits which may seem immediately to spring from it, but which might remain, for better or for worse, were existing methods to be materially altered, or exchanged even for others altogether new and untried. The distresses which are prevalent under our methods of free competition and of great combinations, we should patiently seek to trace back through their remoter connections with the ultimate social structure, and to their final moral as well as economic causes. A particular industrial method may itself be good, although evil from other sources may be flowing through it. Thus competition may carry, like a conduit, evil influences which it does not itself originate. Diseases which may result because some pollution has been poured into a stream farther up, are not to be remedied by putting a dam across the current or changing its course.

The statement of the social problem should be kept scientifically clear from confusion with effects which may be merely symptomatic or incidental, and it needs to be defined by a careful diagnosis of the conditions and functions of the social organism.

2. We must seek, therefore, for a more positive determination of the nature of the existing social problem.

(1) One significant sign is to be observed in the impersonality, or anonymousness, of modern industrial life.[1] The perfection of machinery cheapens fabrics and crushes personality. Workmen are numbered as hands. They cease to be fellow-laborers, unless they become members one of another in some union outside the workshop. Men are no longer bound to their native soil, but in the freedom of labor to go where it will, and on swift lines of travel, they cast off the ties of any local inheritance and fail even to be bound together by the skill of a common handicraft. Workmen are huddled for the day's toil

[1] Mr. Mackenzie has rightly singled out "the impersonality of relations in an industrial community," as one of the "conditions of difficulty" in our social problem.—*An Introduction to Social Philosophy*, p. 99. Similarly, Paulsen characterizes this ominous feature of modern life by the phrase, "its fearful anonymousness."—*System der Ethik*, s. 687.

together amid the clatter of the factory. As man goes to his labor the human voice ceases, and the hum of machinery is everywhere heard.

(2) Together with this impersonality of work, appears the further and still more ominous tendency of society to gather around two opposite poles, capital and labor; and between these centres of class segregation to lose industrial cohesion and to imperil social solidarity.

Under the old dispensation of industrial *status*, which has passed away, the feudal lord and his dependents were held together by many mutual interests and dangers, and in common festivities, likewise, in the same banquet hall. In this new era of industrial freedom the mansion and the tenement may exist within a few blocks of each other, but the capitalists and the day-laborers belong to different worlds, and there is little that they may seem to share together. The mediæval guilds, before they began to degenerate, united masters, journeymen, and apprentices by ties of mutual acquaintance, indispensableness, and profit; our industrial liberty knows but the one bond of contract, and owns but the single obligation of the market-price of labor. The factory-system, and particularly the method of manufacturing through the intervention of a new class of undertakers and contractors, widens the breach between men, and tends to diminish still more dangerously the cohesive power of the industrial organization.

(3) Another sign to be taken into account in determining the social problem is the human waste under the present industrial system.

While the existence of poverty does not by any means measure our whole social problem, the human waste in what is called the submerged class shows that the present system is not accomplishing all that should be expected of a good social organization. The population seems to crowd more than ever the industrial life-raft; and the sinking classes, the "submerged tenth," show that there is a human loss which social economics should seek to prevent, and which Christian ethics must regard as intolerable.

Where there exists a large "reserved army of industry" (to use Karl Marx's significant expression); where, without fixed home or certain ground for economic existence, an unstable population increases, on which capital may make drafts at sight to cheapen labor, and to increase its profits, it is evident that the greatest degree of social efficiency is far from having been reached, and that the problem of the human struggle for existence waits for some more just and happier solution.

(4) Another ominous sign is the tendency to form three permanent monopolies, — the monopoly of land, of capital, and of place; and of the three evils the latter would be felt by many as the worst class grievance.[1]

The evils which have already been mentioned are in part caused and in part aggravated by these monopolistic tendencies to make class interests of the means and the opportunities of life. Socialism has a case in its protest against them; and all considerations of social utility require that some means, either natural or legislative, be found to check and to keep within safe limits these monopolies which existing industrial conditions permit.

If the first two of these monopolies threaten to take from the people the means of subsistence, the latter inflicts the even worse injury of robbing the homes of the poor of hope. There is social danger to be apprehended if the accumulations of inheritance and the combinations of capital should block the paths of successful endeavor to natural talent and enterprise; and we cannot look on with ethical unconcern if the way lengthens, and becomes almost hopeless, for the industrial virtues to reach competence and honorable position in the world.

Although we may question the justness of socialistic principles of equal rewards, we must admit as socially desirable the greatest possible equality of opportunity at the start for natural talent and industrial virtue.[2] It may be urged that the total social prosperity requires the exist-

[1] See Graham, *Socialism, New and Old*, p. 288.

[2] Mr. Marshall justly remarks that the progress of the working classes "has done more than anything else to give practical interest to the question whether it is really impossible that all should start in the world with a fair

ence of industrial classes; that these social divisions are not necessarily to be deplored, if the cross-ways between them, and the avenues of advancement from one to another are kept open and free to individual enterprise and ability. But any obstruction of free circulation in the social organism is a sign of disease and danger. Society is not in a state of healthful equilibrium if the opportunities of success are the share of the privileged few, and hopelessness the inheritance of the many. Wherever a large mass of social hopelessness has accumulated at some crowded centre of civilization, it exists as so much dry tinder for the spark of the agitator; but where, on the other hand, free industrial space, new growths, and open possibilities of advancement are to be found, it will be impossible even for recklessness and passion to kindle a social conflagration.

3. In view of these signs and tendencies, we may reach the following general conclusion concerning the nature of our social problem: the evils, which we have noticed, accompany the rapid differentiation of the complex elements and functions of modern life; our social need, consequently, is a further and better integration of these factors. The vast and rapid industrial development of our age threatens social disintegration; what the age demands is some larger and happier social integration. In this new wholeness and soundness of society all the differentiations which have been historically developed, are not to be destroyed but to be fulfilled. Our social problem is to work out the next needed social integration.

Paulsen defines the social question in these words: "The inward dissolution of the body of the people, that is now exactly the social question. . . . The form in which the social question now comes up, is the inner dissolution (*Auflösung*) of the body of the people through the progressive proletarizing of a constantly increasing portion of the population on the one side, and through the corresponding over-fattening (*Verfettung*) on the other side. On the one side the personal spiritual-moral life falls to the ground through impoverishment and isolation, on the other side through idleness and luxuriousness" (*opus cit.* s. 691). Brentano

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chance of leading a cultured life, free from the pains of poverty and the stagnating influences of excessive mechanical toil; and this question is being pressed to the front by the growing earnestness of the age." — *Principles of Economics*, p. 3.

gives the following statement of the social task to be accomplished: "In short the labor question appears to us as the task not of removing the differences in the social classes, but of reducing them to that degree which the harmony of the life of the whole requires" (*The Relation of Labor to the Law of To-day*, p. 280). Compare with the above these words of Mr. Mackenzie: "Now, apart from this advance in our material prosperity, the conditions which make the social problem more hopeful at the present time may, I believe, all be brought under the head of progress towards a new integration, just as the conditions of difficulty consisted in the main in the various aspects of a process of differentiation" (*Introduction to Social Philosophy*, p. 106).

II. THE NEW INTEGRATION PROPOSED BY SOCIALISM

Socialism ventures upon the task just proposed with a confident programme for a new social order. It indicts the present system as unjust, and it offers a new dispensation of Collectivism, or the Collective Commonwealth, in its place. The moral indictment of socialism against present civilization will be found, when analyzed, to consist of two principal allegations: one is the somewhat vague assertion that every man has a right to a fair share of the products of civilization, supported by the specifications that inequalities, which are dehumanizing, and which ought not to be, exist in the present industrial world. The other charge is the contention that certain methods of the present system, such as competition, production through private capital, individual ownership of the means of production, and the distribution of goods by the present monetary means of exchange, are directly responsible for these wrongs, and are intrinsically evil. It is necessary, therefore, before we can become clear as to our further Christian social duties, for us to examine both these charges of socialism against the existing order.

1. The first contention that every one should receive a fair share of the products of civilization may be admitted as an abstract statement; the practical difficulty is to determine what is each one's share, or on what moral principles in our world the division can be made. Is there any economic rule capable of application, even if we suppose that some collective body had power to apply it to

all alike, by means of which the proper and fair share of every workman in every part of all the products of the common industry could be determined? Take a yard of cotton cloth, for instance, and endeavor with a pair of scissors to divide that yard of cloth into strips, each one of which shall represent the fair share of each kind of labor — the work, thought, management, and interests of all kinds that are woven together in its production. Take that cloth from the hand of the clerk who sells it, or the errand boy who must have some thread in it to represent his share, and try to divide it fairly in justice to the claims of all whose labor is represented in it, from the hands on the cotton fields to the last man who had anything to do with bringing it to you ready for your use; and you could more easily unravel the threads of which it is woven than untangle that combination of labor, both of muscle and of brains, which has produced it. Yet we have to deal not with a single fabric, but with an endless variety of the products of civilization. What omniscience shall determine the fair share of each workman in the grand totality of human labor?

The principle of distribution according to which Marx would make the time of average or normal labor the measure of value, is justly criticised by the economists as involving an arbitrary standard of comparison between different kinds of labor, and as utterly impracticable. There is no common quantitative unit by means of which skilled and unskilled labor can be compared. Physiological science furnishes no foot-pounds of energy by means of which comparison may be made between the labor-time of the hod-carrier and that of the artist or the manager. And if we should seek to find some common measure in the pleasurableness or painfulness of different kinds of work done, we should have nothing but a shifting, subjective standard of value. Moreover, on this scale of pleasure or pain in effort required, as has justly been remarked, unskilled labor should be paid more highly than skilled labor. The attempt to determine the values of different kinds of work in the Collective State, and to issue corresponding labor-checks, would require an incredible amount of book-keeping. The system of distribution would have to be arbitrarily fixed by the estimates of the management, and it would need to be maintained by we know not what force. The economic difficulties, not to say impossibilities, of any method of distribution of products based on labor-values, and measured by labor-units of time, are shown by Professor Graham in his *Socialism, New and Old*, pp. 184–215. On the difficulties of distributive justice see also Sidgwick, *Methods of Ethics*, pp. 255–260.

The programme of socialism fails to show how any economic method of distribution can be conceived and worked which would do equal and exact justice to all individuals, and which, indeed, though it might escape some evils of the present rough method of social utilities, would not be exposed to new and perhaps worse injustice from other consequences of it. Any standard which the Collective All (or the committees representing the collective wisdom) might devise, would of necessity be determined arbitrarily and according to some prevalent conception of values, since there is no real common denominator for all kinds of labor; and as arbitrarily fixed, however wisely, it would be exposed to dissatisfaction and revolution, and it would need to be made universal law of exchange by some omnipresent force. We are not denying that the methods of competition and exchange now in vogue work grievous injustice; but we are questioning whether social justice could be wrought, whether new social injustice would not speedily be occasioned, by any attempt through collective authority to fix a normal labor-unit, or any single conceivable standard of value in exchange.

While the programme of collectivism involves economic impracticabilities, and the ethics of it lie open to grave doubts concerning the nature of the social justice which might flourish under its reign, nevertheless socialism has value as a needed criticism of society; and its criticism compels us to search for more ethical principles by which, under the existing system, men should be guided in the division of profits and in the use of wealth. Can we formulate any ethical principle by means of which the profits of industry might be more equitably shared? Three socialistic principles have been proposed; — to every one alike; to every one according to his needs; to every one according to his work. But would either be a sufficient ethical distribution? What under perfect economic conditions, in a wholly ethicized society, would be an ideal distribution of goods? The first principle of distribution, to all alike, would itself occasion an unequal distribution, because all have not equal needs, or the same capacity

for reception and ability to use what is received; heaven can be no communism; every cup will be filled, but there may be differences in the sizes of the cups. The second principle may be charitable, but it is not just, as needs are no standard either of service rendered or true desert. The third may be just, but it is not merciful. In a perfect distribution of good justice, mercy, and regard for possible use must be combined.

A Christian ethical principle of distribution, which would combine what is true in each of these rules, might be stated in the abstract as follows: to each according to his power of production and capacity of appropriating the good of being, in harmony with the same law for all.

Christian ethics may insist as a regulative principle that one's share in the profits should bear a direct ratio to his social utility.[1] A large share in the products of industry imposes a large social responsibility. The ratio of a man's productive obligation and social responsibility increases in direct proportion with his means. Social justice requires that this direct proportion be maintained between the individual's social utility and his share of the profits of civilization. A clear and intense perception of this ethical principle of the possession of property is one of the marked characteristics of the public conviction at the present time of the responsibilities of wealth. Bishop Butler once said that he should be ashamed of himself, should he die worth ten thousand pounds. The great public are becoming more and more impatient of the man who has accumulated millions and spent little or nothing for the good of the people. Great wealth is to be estimated as an honor or a reproach according to the Christian law of productive use and human service.

Martin Luther sought to fix a Christian rule for prices in trade as follows: "The tradespeople have a common rule among themselves, which is their chief maxim and ground of all finances; that is to say, I may sell

[1] "Do we stand before a new great day of judgment of the history of the world? . . . But one thing is certain: Whoever consumes rents without corresponding service, he works to bring on the judgment." — PAULSEN, *opus cit.* s. 417.

my wares as dearly as I can." He insists that this should not be the rule, but that one should say, "I may sell my wares as dearly as I ought, or as is right and just. . . . For selling shall not be a work which stands freely in your power, without all law and measure as though you were a god, who is bound to no one; but because your selling is a work which you do toward your neighbor, it shall be conducted with such law and conscience that you may do it without harm and injury to your neighbor. You ask, how shall I find out what is right and fair? . . . But now it is fair and right that a merchant shall gain as much on his wares as will pay him for his cost, his pains, labor, and risk." He suggested that the magistrates might appoint suitable men to determine just prices, but he added that the Germans "had so much to do drinking and dancing," that there was no prospect that such a rule would be adopted. He therefore refers men for a standard of prices to the common market-rates; and, where there are none, a man must fall back on his own conscience (*Werke*, vol. x. Walch'sche Aufg. ss. 1094 ff.).

2. Socialism alleges that the present economic method of production by the private ownership of the means of production is wrong, and necessarily works injustice. It attacks the present capitalistic system with a partial theory of value; viz., value is to be measured by the normal labor necessary for the production of any article of exchange. This premise, however, we leave to the severe mercies of the economists. They reason with hard truth that value in exchange involves other elements than this simple theory of it takes into the account; that it is to be measured on a more complex scale of social estimates and utilities; that it is an economic fallacy to reduce all value in exchange to a scale of the labor-time expended in production.[1]

To the charge against capitalistic production economists are prompt in replying that under no scheme of collectivism can all the productive energies of society be called forth; that without individual incentive and enterprise they cannot be fully worked. The radical fallacy of socialism from the economic side is that it does not secure those collective aims and products of society which are the sum-total of the free action of all the individual forces of society.

[1] See a brief but clear statement on this point in Rae's *Contemporary Socialism*, pp. 150 seq. On value, and the fallacy in Karl Marx's theory see also Marshall, *Principles of Economics*, vol. i. pp. 604–31; and Graham, *opus cit.* pp. 138 seq.

We have not space to discuss the strictly economic difficulties into which socialistic schemes plunge. Schäffle evades many of them by remarking: "We leave the practicability of socialism in abeyance, as not yet ripe for speech" (*opus cit.* s. 51). Among these difficulties may be mentioned the trouble which socialists have in imagining a system of exchange and labor-checks, which shall answer all purposes of distribution, and yet not be liable in time to the abuses of money, and even to the danger of eventually becoming capitalized.

Our chief objection, however, to the productive programme of social collectivism is ethical: it does not give enough space and play to the great law of life and growth that unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; nor does it provide for the ethical judgment, which accompanies this law of growth, that from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away.[1] It may be granted that this is a severe law; and it is not the only law of a divine economy of life and growth which, in its whole working, is merciful as well as just. But it is one law of life — it is a biological law of growth and adaptation; it is a deep and far-reaching principle of natural increase and social advancement. It recognizes and gives room for the operation of those incentives to effort and those energies of the human will which it is essential alike to the perfecting of the individual and the largest utilities of society to protect and to stimulate. The economists reason from sound ethical principles when they object that the scheme of collectivism does not put a legitimate premium on the social worth of individual productive ability, and that it involves, moreover, a distinct social wrong to fix by some imagined and arbitrary collective wisdom the incentives and the rewards of effort, which should be left to the free play and competitions of individual wills. And it may further be ethically asserted against the socialists that, within certain limits at least, private capital has social utility, and a social right therefore to receive interest according to its productive virtue.

We have admitted the value of the criticism on society which the socialistic literature has occasioned, while we

[1] Matt. xxv. 29.

have failed to find in the programme of the Collective Commonwealth any workable or even ideally just methods of distribution and production, which might be substituted for the confessedly rough justice of social averages in the rewards and punishments of industrial pursuits under the law of equal freedom. There is another and fatal error in the socialist conception which remains to be noticed.

3. The radical sociological defect of the ideal of collectivism is the selection of a single organ of the many into which society has been differentiated, and the laying upon that single organ the stress of the whole social task. This error characterizes theories of socialism in general; it marks fatally the ideal of collectivism, which is now the leading socialistic theory, and which the word socialism, unless otherwise defined, may be regarded as denoting.

In socialistic theories the State is the one social organ selected to fulfil all the functions of a perfected social life; it is to absorb, or at least to control and fashion, all the functions and energies of industrial, social, and even religious life. The Collective Whole is to be the one sufficient organ for human life. Other spheres of social life, such as the Family, the Church, the free Industrial Associations, are to be subordinated to the State, and to incur the risk at least of social atrophy.

Two serious difficulties rise against the expectation of a social millennium from this method: historic evolution gives us no reason to suppose that any selected social organ can successfully assume the functions of other differentiated social organs; and, secondly, even if it could, loss, and not gain, would follow from the disuse and eventual atrophy of other social organs which have been historically differentiated.

We have already reviewed the several spheres in which the moral ideal seeks for realization; and, we do not hesitate to admit, it is conceivable that these present structural differences in the organization of society may in some future age be fulfilled in social forms which shall be more finely and harmoniously adapted to the life

of another and better world. But this possibility of further social development through further differentiations and higher integrations is one thing; the expectation of attaining a perfect form and complete unity of social life through the selection of some single favored organ and the disuse of others which have been already developed, is another and very questionable hope of social welfare.

The tendency to minimize the social worth of the family sphere is too obvious in some of the grosser socialistic schemes. But Schäffle contends that socialism is not necessarily destructive of private life and freedom (*opus cit.* ss. 24 ff.). Granting that a high estimate may still be put on the family life in the Socialistic State, the question still remains whether an abnormal development of the collective power, and an immense increase of public administration, would not necessarily tend to atrophy of the home, as well as to the loss of other free forms of social culture. So far as the Church is concerned, many socialists look with complacence upon the prospect of the disuse and eventual loss of any special organ for the religious life of the people. If we are reminded that we have conceived a transcendental unity of Church and State to be possible, in which both of these organs of society would cease distinctly to exist, we reply that we have not conceived the one sphere to absorb the other, but rather have admitted a future perfection to be possible in which all the present forms of social life shall be fulfilled in higher and more harmonious diversity in the unity of a sinless freedom before God.

The radical error in this ideal consists in its contradiction of what may be called the biological law of social evolution. It is true that in the development of life some organs may suffer extinction from disuse; but they fall away only through a process of increasing differentiation; it would be degeneracy to return towards the simplicity of the primitive sack of protoplasm. And there is far-reaching scientific truth, which current theories of socialism ignore, in the biological induction that the higher we rise in the scale of organization, the greater grows the impossibility of an exchange of functions between different organs.[1]

We have thus criticised the theories of socialism in general because they seek to bring the complex relations of

[1] "Where parts are little differentiated, they can, with comparative facility, perform one another's functions; but where much differentiated they can perform one another's functions very imperfectly, or not at all." — HERBERT SPENCER, *Sociology*, p. 506.

life under some single, simple form, either by reversion to some former type, or by the creation of some new mould into which all lives are to be run. On the contrary, the social problem is not how to simplify by removing contradictions, but rather how to reconcile the diversities, and to leave free play for the utmost possible differentiations within the unity of the social organism; and this problem is not to be solved by a feat of imagination or through a stroke of revolution.

In this criticism of socialism, however, we are far from denying that there can be any change in the existing social order, or that we have reached in our present industrial methods the end of all economic wisdom. We have much reason to expect social changes that may be of greater beneficence than any which mankind has ever witnessed. The next world-age, in its varied social forms and happier industrial organization, may prove vastly superior to our present wasteful system. No sober observer will deny that socially and economically, as well as politically and religiously, ours is a transitional age. But the inductions of social science may assure us that whatever economic changes are to come about, we should look for them, if they are to be beneficent, as a social evolution rather than revolution, and that the next larger and better integration of society will at least provide for and conserve all that has been gained in the present variety and complexity of individual relations and competitions.

We have not yet gone, however, in our criticism of socialistic ideals to the ethical source of the evils which give rise to our present social problem. We must consider further the fundamental question, What is the cause of the social malady which must be overcome before the ideal of society can be realized?

III. THE ROOT OF THE SOCIAL PROBLEM IN MORAL EVIL

If we analyze some single evil under which any class of men suffer, we shall discover, doubtless, much in their

conditions which might be improved by better environment, but we shall also find at the bottom of all their cup of woe the bitter dregs of the sin of the world.

In Charles Kingsley's *The Saint's Tragedy*, a story of the middle ages, a mob is represented as gathered around the gateway of a castle, and crying, "Bread! Bread! Bread! give us bread; we perish!" A merchant appears with mules laden with corn. But "the scoundrel wants three times its value." He says: —

> "Not a penny less —
> I bought it on speculation — I must live —
> I get my bread by buying corn that's cheap,
> And selling where 'tis dearest. Mass, you need it,
> And you must pay according to your need."

Substantially the same principle still governs the operations of the grain market; when a corner in wheat is attempted, the transaction might be set to the same harsh tune. It would, however, contradict the facts of economic history to imagine that the power of the extortioner has been proportionally multiplied by the immense expansion of the means of distributing the product by the use of steam under great capitalized systems of transportation. It is not so easy amid our universal distribution to keep any necessity of life in any place up to a starvation price. Labor would gain nothing in the bread market by abandoning the modern railway system and going back to the mediæval corn merchant's mules. But the evil which we see is the same spirit of greed, which works now under very different economic conditions for similar ends of avarice. The evil is in the devil of extortion which has entered into and possessed the speculator, not in the mules or the locomotives which he may use. The social problem is, secondarily, how to provide better means of distribution with lessening opportunities for extortion; but ultimately the social question is how to cast out the devils of greed. The moral evil cannot be gotten rid of simply by changing the social system, as muddy water cannot be made pure simply by pouring it from one bucket into another. The moral filtering of society drop by drop

from evil, is the social problem, the Christian task. We are not overlooking the immense aid to be sought in moral reform from the improvement of the conditions of life, and the purification especially of the outward surroundings of poverty and crime; but we are insisting that these greatly needed alleviations and helps themselves have value as parts of, and means for, the ethical renovation of men; and the social aids and adjuncts of reform cannot be substituted for the moral reform itself, or be regarded as identical with the ethical task of renewing men. The ultimate trouble with civilization is not that it has a money-bag, and that some one must carry it; the real question is how to have the bag cared for, and not at the same time to make a Judas Iscariot. How to rid society of the spirit of Judas Iscariot is the ultimate social problem; and that is a question of the man rather than of the money-bag; it is not so much an economic as a moral and religious question. Even if we could conceive of a society organized without military force to keep it together, after the pattern of Mr. Bellamy's twentieth century monotony of bliss, the moral problem would remain, how is the spirit of the betrayer to be kept far even from such homogeneous masses of contentment? how in such an earthly paradise is the entrance of the serpent to be prevented? Industrial independence without real moral freedom, instead of being the attainment of the social goal, might prove to be the beginning of another tragedy of man's fall and need of redemption.

Early Christian history has a significant warning to give in the evils which quickly developed under the temporary socialistic life of the first Christian Church in Jerusalem. Not even the hands of the apostles and the special presence of the Holy Ghost could save that primitive Christian society from complaints, or preserve it as a model for other churches to imitate. Selfishness entered into that early Christian socialism with a miserable deception. The attempt at socialistic self-help on the part of a community which was united by unusual bonds of common interest, has given to history the instructive examples of Ananias and Sapphira. Moreover, the first Jewish-Christian community soon proved to be an economic failure. The poor Christians at Jerusalem were helped by a general collection from the Gentile Churches. There may have been special historical reasons for this failure; and it may be argued that

isolated socialism cannot be expected to succeed, but only national collectivism, or, indeed, international socialism. But usually we trust those principles to show beneficent workings on a large scale which have proved themselves to be safe in smaller beginnings.

IV. SOCIAL DUTIES UNDER THE EXISTING SYSTEM

In view both of the truth which may be admitted in the socialistic arraignment of the present order, and also of the defects in the ideal of collectivism, and in view likewise of the nature and moral causes of the present social problem, certain near and practical duties may be urged.

1. It is a clear social duty to recognize what is moral in the existing order of things. Whatever changes the next world-age may bring to pass, whatever social judgments may be impending, the way of social progress is still marked by the old virtues of frugality, honesty, temperance, industry, fidelity, and honor. A genuine social reform will appeal to the deep moral consciousness of the people.

2. Following upon this first social obligation of recognizing the good even amid things evil, is the further social duty of making the best possible use of the ethical powers of the present order. The immediate and often pressing social obligation is to work to the utmost the good, which we may lay hold of, against the evil before us which should not be tolerated. They are the real leaders of men, the genuine reformers, the moral prophets whom it is safe to follow, who, while greeting with cheerful optimism the promise of the better day that is to come, strive to call forth and to marshal for immediate ends the reserved powers of righteousness and love which are now ready to work together for the good of the community. Such men are not destroyers, neither are they dreamers; but they are makers and builders, and their works remain.

With these strong and healthful social upbuilders one may contrast the social democrats in their prophesyings of the destruction of the whole order of the world. Destroy first, some say; then build up. But Samson's method of bringing the feast of the rich Philistine lords to an end by pulling the whole house down upon them, even though he was buried himself at the bottom of the heap, may afford an heroic instance of retribution; it is not meant, however, as a biblical model of social reform.

3. Together with these immediate social duties, is the obligation to seek along all practical lines the further ethical development of the existing social system. Industrial measures and proposed legislation, which may approve themselves as practical means for the advancement of any class of men, are not to be at once rejected because they may be chargeable with socialistic tendencies. Many such ideas may fall within the lines of the legitimate development of existing institutions; the criterion to be applied to any new measure is its probable social efficiency.

In determining whether a new method of business or an act of legislation is likely thus to prove efficient, we are to inquire into its conformity with the social laws which are to be derived from the inductions of history and economic science. Social teleology, or the adaptation of proposed measures to the greatest good of the greatest number according to the known processes of social law, is the sole practical measure of ethical judgment in questions of public policy and legislation. It is not an infallible rule, but it is the best wisdom given us to follow in finding our way, step by step, towards the promised land.

For example, if the public ownership of any particular form of industry, such as the postal service, the telegraph, municipal waterworks, a railway system, or other object of common necessity, can be shown on the whole to be good; if it can be demonstrated that the security of other interests of the people require the public administration of a particular industry, and that it can thus be more efficiently managed in the long run for the public good to which it is essential, — then, provided these reasonings are sound, no mere theory of liberty should debar the State from assuming such responsibility; as, on the other hand, no mere theory of paternal government should lead the State to make haste to interfere unnecessarily with private enterprise.

So sober an economist as Mr. Marshall, in speaking of governmental intervention, leaves it as an open question whether it is "necessary to retain in their full force all the existing rights of property" (*opus cit.* p. 97).

Our ethical obligation is not to take the kingdom of social good by violence, nor to give up effort to reach it, but rather to follow the good which becomes practical from one point to the next in the way of human advancement.

The ethics of social questions is not an ethics of the chair, but of real life and its fruits.

Nor is it usually difficult to find in any community the next social good to be attained. No country lacks causes for immediate reforms. Social science shows to sober intelligence enough good waiting, just beyond present customs and laws, to be accomplished. To reach the social aims which are already clearly in sight, requires the energy and devotion of all good citizens, and it is not sound moral sense to waste the vitality needed for immediate work in a propagandism of social dreams. We may indeed take heart from prophetic visions of some future world-age; but while that which is best for man tarries, the next better things demand our devotion, and become in their time our supreme social duties. If the ethics of the social problem seems thus to bring us down to near and commonplace efforts, we should remember that the law of gaining many things through fidelity to few things obtains as truly for society as for the individual; and all sound social progress follows this divine law of life. Nor would the amount of social progress in any centre of population be inconsiderable if good citizens generally kept a vigilant eye upon the immediate and clear social and governmental requirements of the community.

The definition which we have already given of the nature of our social problem indicates further certain directions in which we may find immediate and urgent social tasks.

4. Our present social duties plainly require us to resist in all practical ways the tendency to industrial disintegration, and to throw our personal influence in with the powers that make for a better social integration. We have already distinguished a social integration, which shall be comprehensive of all the differences gained by social evolution, from the attempt to reduce society to a uniform solid under the pressure of socialism; we now assert, without fear of being socialistic, that certain disintegrating tendencies of this capitalistic age need to be checked in the public interest, and that it is an urgent

social duty to help on whatever may serve to bind class interests together in a larger human unity. Nor are some means to this end far to seek. Nature under her iron laws counteracts to some extent the accumulation of capital as an increasing family inheritance; there seem to be natural laws for the distribution of wealth in the third or fourth generation, as well as for its accumulation from father to son. But as nature's first principle is to leave room for the play of human freedom for worse as well as better, we cannot trust the remedy of the self-created evils of society, as the *laissez faire* economists would do, entirely to the severe benignities of natural laws. There is scientific social work to be done both in keeping the avenues of preferment wide open to individual talent and enterprise, and also in restricting the accumulation and use of wealth to an extent which threatens the public welfare. The ethics of the social question requires the application of social science to the laws of inheritance, and the prevention of the abuses of monopolies and of the accumulation under private ownership of the means of production of necessary things beyond the point where the freedom which is requisite for the development of productive enterprise may become dangerous to the life of the people.

It lies somewhat beyond our province to discuss particular measures for this end, such as a progressive income tax, or a graduated tax on inheritance. The single tax idea, advocated by Mr. George, must succeed in demonstrating, as it has not done, its economic soundness, before we need raise the moral question how under existing conditions could it ethically be carried out. With regard to monopolies and trusts, the legitimate use of them, their actual or possible social utility, needs to be defined, in order that their abuses may be restricted.

In the fifteenth century trading-societies and bankers, like the Fuggers, began to control and to absorb the profits of the newly opened commerce of the East; with regard to their methods and abuses Martin Luther expressed his scruples with his wonted Christian vigor. "They oppress," he said, "and destroy all smaller tradespeople, as the pike does the little fish in the water; just as though they were lords over all God's creatures, and free from all laws of faith and love. . . . How shall it ever be godly and right that a man in so short a time becomes so rich that he might buy out kings and kaisers?" After describing their extortionate ways, which were very similar to some methods of modern monopolies, he exclaims; "What wonder is it that they become kings,

and we beggars?" Their operations produced instability in prices, to which he alludes as follows: "An everlastingly sure penny is worth more than a temporary uncertain gulden. Now such bands do not exchange their everlastingly sure gulden for our temporary uncertain pennies." He denounced these monopolists with genuine socialistic indignation: "These people are not worthy of being called men, or dwelling among people. . . . It would be right for the magistracy to take from such all that they have, and to drive them from the land. . . . If these bands remain, justice and honesty will perish; shall justice and honesty remain, these bands must perish. The bed is too narrow, says Esaias, one must fall out, and the coverlid is too small to cover both." These citations are from Luther's *Bedenken von Kaufshandlung*. Much more of interest concerning the customs of trade and the application of the ethics of the Reformation to business, is to be found in Luther's *Von Übertreibung im Handel und Wandel* (Werke, Walsh'she Aufg. vol. x.). To the words above quoted Martensen adds in his reference to Luther's view of monopolies this sentence: "A bridle must be put into the mouth of the Fuggers and all such societies (*Christian Ethics* (*Social*), vol. ii. p. 141). I have not been able, however, to find this sentence in any of the editions of Luther's works accessible to me, including the original edition of this writing. It comes nearer the right view to be taken of monopolies than some of Luther's more vigorous denunciations of their evils; for the social thing now to be done is to bridle monopolies for the public service. They are powers to be bridled and used rather than driven out of civilization.

Within the spheres of private industry and personal endeavor much service may be rendered in binding men more helpfully and happily together; and in these relations there is no social obligation more constant or imperative. Every manufacturer, every business man, has opportunity and divine calling within his own private business to serve the highest interests of society. The social obligations of men to men in their industries are not to be left out of the account as though they belonged only to some conscienceless and loveless domain of economics, and not to the world of God's love. Whatever in the conduct of private business experience commends as profitable to prevent the proletarizing of a laboring class, becomes an ethical responsibility and a Christian duty of the administrator and the capitalist. The use and devotion of wealth to the broadest and highest human utilities is the supreme social obligation of the rich, which justice requires and which love expects. In the accumulation and use of property, as well as in the direction of it by

bequests, the question which Martin Luther asked the rich is still very much to the point, "What at last will God say about it?"

V. THE DUTIES OF THE CHURCHES CONCERNING THE SOCIAL QUESTION

The Christian Church carries in itself the idea of the true society in which dwelleth righteousness and wherein nothing hurts or makes afraid. But so long as society is burdened with oppressions, rent into classes, and pervaded with injustice; so long as whole areas of human life are left in gloom and joylessness, and many toil without light or hope, the Christian ideal of society tarries, and the social mission of the Church of the Son of man remains unfulfilled.

1. It is the obvious obligation of the Christian Church, therefore, not to stand idly by as an indifferent spectator of the social questions of the day. In fidelity to itself as the heir of Christ's Spirit and the possessor of the promise of his gospel, the Church must seek to enter into all human relations, and to form and reform in social truth and justice, and in the hope of the kingdom of heaven, every successive industrial age and the entire economy of the world. The pulpit has a divine call to champion the rights of men, and to rebuke the wrongs which crush the hopes of the people. The preacher of the gospel must be the fearless friend of the poor and the down-trodden. The Church as a Church, in loyalty to the gospel of the Son of man, will stand avowedly for all just causes. No Christian man has received by family privilege, wealth, or culture, a reserved place in the Church of God where he may quietly sit as a spectator and criticise the whole action and passion of human life. An ancient Hebrew psalm used some plain words concerning those who sit in the seat of the scornful; it is our more refined modern sin to sit in the seat of the socially indifferent; and when in the world's great arena we see so many wrongs striving to be made right, and great works of faith

are to be done to bring the lives of whole classes of men to happier issues, we can imagine what the voice in the modern pulpit of an old-time prophet of the Lord would be, could he look up from the thick of the struggle to the reserved seats of piety, wealth, and education, and glance at the complacent rows of decorous spectators of Christianity. It is one of the inspiring spiritual signs of our times that the Church of Christ is rising to the greatness and nobleness of its social mission in Christ's name. The ecclesiastical form of religion is already quickened, and becoming filled anew with the Spirit of the Lord, so that it shall represent the Messianic hope of the people. The prophets and heralds of the coming age of a powerful social Christianity are everywhere finding voice and heart. The flood of the new reformation of the Lord's gospel of social salvation is gathering volume and strength from heaven, and shall sweep all our churches out from their sheltered coves and shallows into its broad and sunny humanity.

In our Christian passion for humanity we may not forget, however, for a moment, that love works in truth. There must be clear light as well as zeal in Christian philanthropy.

2. A second duty of the Church, consequently, is the patient and practical study of sociological principles and laws. Sound education in sociology is becoming more than ever an indispensable part of education for the ministry of the Church. Scientific methods of investigation of the causes and tendencies which produce poverty and crime and the waste of civilization, must furnish the material for the moral flame of the pulpit. The social duty of the Church is to give practical effectiveness, by all its energies of consecrated service, to the best scientific methods of draining the sources of human misery and reclaiming the waste places of life. The Church is to represent the most enlightened social conscience in the high places of power; hence those who are called to give voice to the conscience of Christian love from the pulpit or in the halls of legislature, particularly need the clear

and steady intelligence which can be gained only through patient and prolonged study of sociology. By its profound interest in men for Christ's sake, the Church must be studious not to be mistaken in its appeals for social legislation.

3. The present duty of the Church in relation to social questions within its special sphere, and so far as concerns the active exercise of its own powers of doing good to all classes, should be positively urged. The true idea of the Church in its relation to society is expressed in that terse phrase by which of old an apostle defined the aim of his missionary life: "I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some."[1] No nobler name for a church could be written over its porch than this: "*The Church of All Things to All Men for the Gospel's Sake.*"

With some statesmanlike foresight and adaptation of its forms to the needs of different classes of men, a true church will seek to minister from its own radiant centre in all directions of good to the community in the midst of which it exists. The Church which shall worthily fulfil its social mission will be within itself a well-ordered organization of all helpful Christian works and philanthropies. It will be a place for the preaching of the Word, and a house of prayer; it will be also, and because it is these, a thoroughly equipped institute of humanity. The modern Church, organizing thus all Christian humanities and philanthropies in its own spiritual power, will represent in the moral sphere what the principle of combination represents in the commercial world or on the railway map. It will become the strong and firm centre around which different industrial groups may be gathered and harmonized. It will thus be a permanent as well as powerful force of true social development.

In the fulfilment of its supreme social task the Church may represent, as in all its teachings and customs it should illustrate, the larger and higher human interests and relationships in which the lives of individuals may be socially completed. These great human concerns are the

[1] 1 Cor. ix. 22.

social multiples of the individual life. Our private lives are to be multiplied with others in the universal welfare. The Church is to represent this possible enlargement of life in the multiplications of God's gracious providences. Its communion in the love of God is the largest multiple, the highest enhancement, of life. And from the fulness of God's love for the whole world the Church looks for the dawn of the better world-age to come. Only the Sun of Righteousness can illumine all. The little lights in the friendly windows of our human homes shine but intermittently along the way, and the darkness closes again around the torches of every passing procession of reform; the Church looks with earnest expectation, and waits in hope for the day of the Lord, in which there shall be no more curse upon labor, and no more night for despairing men.

CHAPTER V

DUTIES TOWARDS GOD

In the Old Testament specific duties towards God are enjoined. Not only was the whole Hebrew conception of duty a religious conception, all sin being regarded as a trespass against God,[1] and all righteousness a walking in God's ways,[2] but also specific acts, states of mind, and motions of the heart were required as duties which Israel owed to the Lord its God. Jehovah was not indefinitely and vaguely conceived as "the power that makes for righteousness" (according to Matthew Arnold's uncritical interpretation of the Hebrew literature), but He is the living God, to whom are to be rendered duties specific as the offering of praise and sacrifice, the confession of sin, the acknowledgment of benefits, prayer, and acts of obedience, as well as the more general obligations of fear, submission, and waiting on the Lord.[3]

In the New Testament true life, according to Jesus Christ, is the doing the will of the Father. All morality is set in a religious obligation; every duty towards man is fulfilment of the one obligation of our life towards God. Religion might be said to be the Godward side of morality, and morality the manward side of religion. This simple and pervasive view of life as in all things a pleasing God, does not exclude, however, from the teaching of Jesus and the disciples the mention of certain specific acts as duties directly owed to God. Prayer and thanksgiving, obedience and trust, and love in the highest,

[1] Num. v. 6. [2] Deut. xxiv. 16–19.

[3] 1 Chron. xvi. 8, 11, 28, 29; Deut. vi. 5, 13; x. 12; Ps. xxvii. 14; Is. lv. 6, 7; Hos. xiv. 2; etc.

are to be offered to God our Father, and the Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.[1]

The admission into ethics of a special class of duties towards God has not only been refused by philosophical moralists, like Kant, but also for a different reason it has been regarded as an improper classification of duties by theological writers like Rothe. It is urged either that, because all duties are religious, no special duties towards God need to be distinguished, or that, because God is unknown, and not directly the object of our moral action, we cannot properly speak of duties towards Him.

Rothe, proceeding from the teleological relation towards the moral end, by which a manner of acting is determined, held that there are but two moral ends to which action may be related, and consequently but two general categories of duty, viz., the individual and the universal moral end; and consequently he recognized only the self-duties and the social duties. (*Theol. Ethik*, v. iii. § 857.) He proceeds to argue at length against the ordinary threefold division in which duties towards God are co-ordinated with duties towards self and others. His objections are two; first, that it is unethical to define a duty by its object, and not by reference to its moral end; and, secondly, that our duties have indeed essentially a relation to the end of God, but that since they all have this relation, and all have it essentially, there is no place for a special category of religious duties. Rothe rejects the Kantian reasoning that we cannot speak of duties towards God because He is not an object of our moral action, rightly maintaining that in a true ethical sense God may be regarded as the object of our action; but he would drop entirely the logical category of duty towards any object as confusing.

We have already admitted the truth of Rothe's reasoning so far as to modify the ordinary classification of duties in the text-books by adding to the definition of the objects towards which our action may be directed, the ethical idea also of the relation of our action towards those objects as moral ends (p. 324). But admitting this reference to moral ends in all duties, we see no sufficient reason why the ordinary objective categories of duties as duties in respect to self, in regard to others, and in relation to God should not stand. It is a convenient classification, and it corresponds to distinctions of objects which in some way must be recognized in the survey of our duties. An action which has for its immediate object the relief of some necessity of another, or the immediate satisfaction of some felt want of one's self, is certainly objectively to be distinguished from an action which seeks God for the sake of offering to Him grateful recognition, or intercessory prayer. Rothe introduces all that is ordinarily summarized as duty towards God under the "Religious Means of Virtue," and also under the "Duty to educate One's Self," especially to

[1] Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Our Father who art in heaven"; to keep the commandments which are summed up in love to God and one's neighbor; and in general to render unto God the things that are God's. Specific duties towards God are commended in the Epistles: Col. i. 12; 1 John iii. 22; Eph. vi. 18; Rom. xii. 1; 2 Cor. v. 20; Heb. xiii. 15; etc. See also Tit. ii. 12, where a threefold obligation of life seems to be assumed.

"a virtuous piety." But in this religious virtue, and in these means of grace, there is always a relation not only to the supreme end of God's will, but also to God himself as the object of love, — to God as revealed in Christ as the object of personal devotion, — a relation of which Rothe was not unmindful, although it hardly fits into his ethical scheme.

Our duties in relation to God as the Supreme End may be considered in view of two general aspects of God's relation to us: He is the unknown One, and He is the known God; hence we have duties in relation to God both as the unrevealed and as the revealed God.

I. DUTIES IN RELATION TO THE UNKNOWN GOD

The question will at once be raised, How can we have any obligations towards an object which is unknown? And this objection against the whole obligation of religion has become familiar in modern literature. But shall modern agnosticism build no altar to an unknown God?

Kant's reason for excluding from philosophical ethics duties towards God was this: "Duty towards God is a transcendent duty, *i.e.* such an one that no corresponding outward obligatory subject can be given to it (*Metaphysik der Sitten*, s. 43); a duty "wherein our whole immanent duty consists only in the thought relations" (*Ibid.* s. 49). "Duty towards God is duty towards man himself, *i.e.* not objectively the obligation of rendering certain services towards another, but only subjectively of strengthening the moral motive in our own law-giving reason" (*Ibid.* s. 333). Duties towards God are not "*a priori* cognizable, but only empirically as duties pertaining to revealed religion" (*Ibid.* s. 33).

We proceed to consider in what sense duty towards God as unknown may be enjoined, or what religious obligation should be admitted by an agnostic.

Obviously, if an object be regarded as absolutely unknown, to speak of an obligation imposed by it would be a contradiction in terms. It must be known at least as an object of thought, or as a possibility of existence, although beyond our finite power of comprehension, if we are to speak of it at all, or to raise any question concerning it. An agnosticism, however, which accepts ignorance of God as a necessity of our finiteness, does not necessarily go so far as to exclude the idea of an infinite Power, or an ulti-

mate Force, or an eternal Somewhat, the idea of which may be used, like a symbol for an unknown quantity, in the solution of the problems of the universe. In other words, agnosticism is not necessarily atheism, or an attempt of the idea of causation to commit *felo de se* in atheism.

We may speak consequently of an intellectual obligation to the idea of the Unknown Power, which reason admits in its endeavor to think out the law of causation and to construe intelligibly the processes of the universe. This intellectual obligation would require, for example, consistency and truth in dealing with the symbol of the unknown in the equations which science forms for the solution of the problem of existence. It is not to be trifled with — to be introduced into the argument when hard pressed, and to be quietly cancelled when its presence might encumber the process. Acknowledgment of it is to run through all the evolutionary reasoning; the possible existence of another and greater factor in the mechanics of the worlds and the development of life, is to be kept open in every formula which may be deduced as law and proclaimed as positive science. We conceive, therefore, that there is an obligation of severe and consistent truth to be rendered even to the idea of the Unknown God.

This intellectual attitude will render necessary, further, corresponding moral conditions. It cannot be maintained without reverence. The mystery of life naturally awakens the feeling of awe; wisdom is a growing wonder; but the reverence which is due the idea of the Unknown God is more than a vague consciousness of the mystery of being; it is voluntary, intelligent submission of mind to the idea of a Truth beyond its logic, and a Power above the mastery of our science. In the thought of an unrevealed God there may be rendered a reverence of spirit, and an obedience of the intellect, which shall be as the fear of the Lord in which is the beginning of wisdom.

Consequent upon this habitual attitude of reverent intellect will be still further an earnest waiting of mind upon the Unknown God which will ethically be like that waiting on the Lord which was a virtue of the Hebrew religious

faith. It is always possible that the Unknown may become more and more known in the processes of things. Evolution may be revelation; and man standing at the height and in the glory of a finished course of cosmic evolution may know the Unknown, as prophets on lower heights and with dimmer light of reason could not have gained vision of the Eternal. And though the end be far from us, the revelation may be brightening as the evolution is ascending; therefore waiting on the Lord should be part of the agnostic's religious creed.

Still further obligations of trust, hope, and confidence toward God, might reasonably be commended as religious duties to be deduced even from the limited premises concerning revelation permitted by the agnostic's creed; for the lines of the working of the Unknown Power broaden with the ages, and augmenting good flows in, like a tide, from the limitless Beyond.

This general religiousness of the intellect, as well as these ethical relations of mind and heart toward the great Unknown, will prevent lightness of speech concerning man's highest spiritual problems, and most sacred emotions, and should lend to the whole pursuit of science a worshipful tone and purpose. He who has once felt the presence of the Unknown God can never be found sitting in the seat of the scornful. Even the silence of science concerning God should be reverent, and its speech should be always true to the larger possibility of life in some future knowledge of the Unseen and the Eternal. If we may not live, like the father of the faithful, as seeing Him who is invisible, we should at least live as members of a race to whom a Son may be born who shall see God.

The religious duties of an agnostic in relation to the public worship of God present a somewhat different and broader subject of inquiry; further considerations to be derived from social ethics must be allowed to enter into their determination. The general obligation may be urged of uniting, so far as one can, with others in that attitude of reverence and humble acknowledgment of our human finiteness and dependence which is expressed in public

worship, and which is admitted to be a becoming posture of the reason in view of the Unknown Power in whom the eternal order and law of the universe consist.

Moreover, although the popular religious faiths contain more doctrine of God than the creed of agnosticism can receive, the withdrawal of the individual from all participation in the religion of the community might prove to be as much, if not a greater, misrepresentation of his true religious position as would be involved in an apparent accommodation of himself to the existing modes of religious communion; for if he cannot affirm what the popular creeds teach of theology, neither will he deny the finite dependence, or the spiritual possibility, or the human sense of need and hope for something better than is known, in which the religious nature of man has perpetual spring and power. Moreover, for his own breadth of vision the solitary thinker cannot afford to withhold himself entirely from the general human hopes and fears, and from the current religious movements of the social whole of which he is a member. In the great congregation he may find spiritual contacts and influences which in the solitude of his own intellect and the felt emptiness of his own wisdom he might miss. Both from the side of social utility, and from the point of view of the individual profit which is to be gained by keeping in ever fresh contact with the common life of humanity, much might be said in behalf of the obligation of participation in public worship and religious devotion, even though one's personal creed be mostly a confession of ignorance written in negations, and without assured faith in the love of God.

It might be further urged that the agnostic, who fulfils thus to the utmost such religious obligations as his limited theology may admit; who is reverent, who is watchful for the breaking of any truth from beyond the horizons of the seen, and who is not an unwilling participant in our human confession of religious need and hope, will thereby be able the more fairly to enter with understanding into the great argument of divinity which believers in revelation find running through the history of the

world; he will be better able to measure the strength of the Godward currents of human thought and life, and will hold his own personality within reach and touch of such influences of the Spirit of the living God as man may be able to receive through his rational and moral nature, and in the stirring of the spiritual depths of his being. Individual isolation from humanity is never wise; least of all is it wisdom when the isolation might involve loss of the diviner consciousness of humanity. The explorer must keep within sound of the stream, if he would find his way out with it from its springs in the mountain heights, on which the dawn rested, through the tangle of the forest, to the ocean beneath heaven's full evening light.

II. DUTIES IN RELATION TO THE REVEALED GOD

Faith in the revealed God is the splendid heritage of Christian life. The Christian's creed of morality towards God is richer than the agnostic's can be. It resembles the trust of filial piety in the home, and the cheerful humanities of the fireside, rather than the felt dependence and awe of the lonely gazer through the eye of the telescope into the Divine mystery of the starlit night.

For our immediate ethical purpose it will be sufficient to observe these two broad truths concerning the ethical scope and character of revelation: (1) The course of revelation makes it plain that moral truth is one and the same in man and God: (2) In its historic consummation revelation discloses the adorable Christlikeness of God. From these ethical characteristics of God's self-revelation our Christian duties in relation to God may be determined; in view of the essential identity of the morally good in the finite and the Infinite, and the revealed Christlikeness of the Eternal One, our general religious consciousness of obligation may receive distinctive Christian color and form; and this Christian distinctiveness of our obligation to God will appear in such particulars as the following.

1. The Christian knowledge of God should restrain men from imputing to God any decrees, acts, or purposes, which in the light of Christ's revelation of the righteous Father appear to be contrary to our truest moral ideas.

Although our moral judgments are confessedly imperfect, and our ethical conceptions admit of further purification and expansion, still our moral knowledge, so far as it goes, is real knowledge, and we are not to falsify its truth, under any stress or strain of logic, in our thought of our God. God's ways are not as our ways; his universe is still like unfinished architecture before our eyes; and one must be possessed of the creative idea and the whole conception of the architect to be able to judge correctly the uncompleted work with its broken lines and apparently unrelated parts. Criticism of unfinished architecture is proverbially false. But in our anxiety to behold as a harmonious whole God's as yet unfinished architecture of the universe, we must not call the crooked straight, nor regard the apparent wrong as right. Lines of the incomplete creation, which now are separate, may meet in some perfect arch of the divine design beyond our sight; yet we should not sacrifice our present perceptions of moral truth to the completeness of our little systems. We must wait the eternal issues while we appeal directly from the known moral truth in man to the ethics of the God of light, in whom there is no darkness at all. Love is love always; and there is no shadow that is cast by turning in the righteousness of the Father of lights.[1]

There is no sovereignty but love in God himself. In his "love," as Dorner has said with profound moral truth. "God is the power over his omnipotence."[2] Love is God of God. Whenever therefore in the deductions of our theologies or in our spiritual entanglement amid the thick moral perplexities of the world, we are inclined to impute to God decrees, modes of procedure, or judgments, which we could not imagine ourselves as approving without putting out the moral light that is within us and quenching the Spirit of the Christ who has shown

[1] James i. 17. [2] *Christl. Glaubenslehre*, ii. s. 442.

us the Father; always we should regard such dilemmas of our logic, and such confusions of good in our systems, as the work of the Evil One, even though as of old he quote Scripture to lead us to doubt the true God. The one thing which revelation permits us to assume, which it commands us to trust with our whole heart, is the perfect Christlikeness of God. The worst atheism is not failure of the reason to receive the evidences of God's existence; but denial in the heart of the moral glory of the Godhead. The ethical duty of love to God requires us to find, or to make, open windows in our creeds, through which we may gaze out upon the infinite lovableness of God.

2. The revelation of God, which as Christians we have received, requires of us further such positive duties in relation to God as the following: —

(1) The duty of reconciliation with God.

This obligation proceeds from the revelation of God who was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.[1] The great reconciliation was the message of God, of which the apostles had become ambassadors; the Divine reconciliation waits for the world to turn towards its celestial grace, as the glowing sky of evening waits for the earth to rest in its pure peace. Oneness with God in the inmost will is man's first obligation to his God. To throw one's whole being upon God's grace is the supreme act of Christian faith.

(2) The duty of prayer and communion with God.

The Christian man may cultivate the habit of thoughtful, appreciative, and reverent fellowship of mind and heart with his God. Such communion (together with whatever religious exercises and times of prayer may be necessary or conducive to it) we are to regard as our Christian obligation toward God, because, through his revelation in Christ, God invites us to such spiritual communion; and our grateful Christian consciousness of God, and our making known our requests unto Him, will be the fitting response of our being to God's drawing nigh to us in the Spirit of Christ.

[1] 2 Cor. v. 19.

It lies beyond our present limits to enter at length into the discussion of the philosophy of prayer. It is sufficient for our purpose to observe that the unknown relations of the living God to the forces of nature, and the springs of human conduct, leave room for the ethics of prayer; and, further, the known relations to men of the revealed God justify the duties of prayer which the Scriptures enjoin.

(3) To these first duties toward God should be added the general Christian habit of referring all our conduct, service, and moral effort to God as to the One supremely interested in our human lives, and to whom all true success of men's spirits is pleasing. In view of the revelation of God's thought and God's love for men, which has been made through Christ, we should bring to Him as a thank-offering all the fruits of the Spirit in the new life of faith and hope.

(4) An obligation, moreover, of special religious acts and observances, is often due in the fulfilment of our duty toward God.

The use of the Christian means of grace and the observance of public worship have already been enjoined as acts necessary to the fulfilment of one's obligation to self as a moral end, and also as parts of our religious social obligation. There are, however, particular acts of thanksgiving, prayer, or worship, which seem to be due not merely for the sake of the moral benefit to be derived from them in the believer's own growth in knowledge and grace, and which are not obligatory simply on account of their social utilities, but which are fitting expressions of the personal friendship of the disciple to the Master, and of the loving dependence of the spirit upon the Father in heaven. A life passed without frequent and direct acknowledgment to God of His mercies would lack toward Him a certain element of graciousness which we commend as a virtue in human friendships. Only an unchristian conception of God as impassive and remote, not a Christian conception of fatherhood in the nature of God, can lead us to think of our childlike motions of trust, and simple expressions of gratitude, and moments of joyous uplooking to Him, as without value and not pleasing in His sight.

The observance of the Christian Sabbath, therefore, is to be urged not only for reasons of social utility, or on account of its reflex benefits in the individual life, but also as a special religious duty, and an offering of love to God.

All the preceding duties are summed up and filled to overflowing in the one Christian obligation of personal love to God. We can love God only as he is revealed to be loveable; He has been revealed in his adorable loveableness in Jesus Christ, and our supreme obligation to God himself passes into the privilege and delight of loving Him with all the mind and heart and strength. As the disciples of old learned to follow their Master up to the full measure of manly devotion, so all souls to whom God's Person is made known in Christ are to love God in the highest. Our Christian obligation toward God himself in its full measure is the love of Love, the love of God who is love, — the love of God which thinks no evil of God, which believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things from God — love which rejoiceth in the truth of God — love which never faileth toward God, for now we see in a mirror, darkly, but then face to face: so the apostle's royal words concerning charity may be used with no lessened intensity of devotion to describe also that love toward the Father which Jesus knew in its fulness, and which the saints have cherished in their pure hearts as they passed into the beatific vision of God.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHRISTIAN MORAL MOTIVE POWER

Ethics in its most important and its profoundest significance is a question of power. No treatise on ethics is complete which does not meet fully and fairly the question, What is the moral dynamics of human life and history?

Our whole modern conception of nature is dynamical; it is a problem of forces with which man has to do alike in his thought, his science, and his conduct. We can no longer take things around us simply as they seem to be, looking upon our world as a passing panorama, or series of dissolving views; we feel more deeply the awful power and mystery of things. Nature is not merely a created picture around us, amid which our homes also have been fairly painted; nature is a ceaseless play of forces about us, and we, too, are powers in the midst of immeasurable forces of life and destiny. Our earth, though it be but a point in space, is the meeting-place of principalities and powers from beneath and from above; every particle of matter in it quivers to the attraction of forces from everywhither; and we ourselves are not mere existences in an assembly of things; we are soul-centres of energy, vibrating to the touch of unseen powers.

This dynamical, as distinguished from a statical view of nature and personality, is also the profoundly ethical conception. In the ethical view we are forces among forces; our life is a question of moral forces; earth and heaven, light and darkness, this world and the powers of the world to come, meet and contend for mastery, act and are acted upon, for good and evil, in the will and charac-

ter, the life and the destiny of each living soul, and in the history likewise of the great social whole of humanity.[1]

This dynamical conception of ethics is psychologically true. For the mind is not a mechanical register of impressions or scripture of innate ideas, but it is the field rather for the play of sensations, thoughts, reasonings, imaginations, and for the triumphs of truth, or the victories of error; consequently, modern psychology is an inquiry into the forces and processes of consciousness, and not a mere reading of the results of thought. The intuitional philosophy, so long as it tarries in mechanical conceptions of mind and gives only a statical account of consciousness, is left hopelessly behind by evolutionary psychology. The remark which Lotze has made with regard to the study of physiology, may be applied with equal and even greater force to the study of psychology, that the *processes* of life may be themselves of more value to us than their products. For elaboration of this view I must refer to an article on the "Dynamical Theory of the Intuitions," in the *New Englander*, May, 1878, p. 357.

The final ethical question, accordingly, to which all ethical inquiries lead, is the question of the moral motive power. Ethics may be divided into three main departments, of which the last is of most far-reaching importance: What is the nature of virtue? What is the standard of moral judgment? What is the motive power for moral action?

This dynamical moral view of a human life is the most fascinating view of it. When we form the habit of contemplating our own lives, however humble they may be, as powers among the universal powers; when we recognize also in the lives of our fellow-men the operation of forces from above and from beneath; when we regard the whole development of human history as a conflict of world-powers, all of them held within the grasp of some mightier purpose, and working together for far-off prophetic issues; then the whole theatre of human life, even the less conspicuous portions of it, becomes invested with a strange fascination, is possessed often with an awful significance, and at times we may watch, as almost breathless spectators, this vast and momentous conflict of the ages.

The power of moral ideals is to be estimated in the motives for their realization which they inspire among those

[1] St. Paul's epistles show how profoundly he had entered into this dynamical conception of human life as a conflict between the powers of this world and the powers of the world to come.

who receive them. It is still further to be judged by the capacity of the moral ideal for extension in ever broadening circles of influence among men. The test of the adequacy of the moral motive power for human life is thus seen to be twofold; — its transforming intensity among those who receive it, and its missionary energy in the world.

In all the conceptions of virtue which have been cherished from antiquity some "virtue-making power" may be recognized. But the question of supreme practical concern is not whether a given moral conception possesses some motive power, but whether we may discover in any moral ideal an adequate "virtue-making power" for the human race.

The Platonic ethics recognized the moral motive which proceeds from the contemplation of the morally beautiful, but it did not meet the question, How shall a man born blind to the morally beautiful receive his sight? At best those incapable of philosophical contemplation must be morally controlled by the State. Aristotle, perceiving the inadequacy of knowledge to make men virtuous, seeks in the concluding book of the Nicomachean ethics to give some answer to the question, How shall men become virtuous? Happiness he regards as an energy, and virtue is to be obtained by the practice of virtue. Aristotle rightly lays stress upon the power of habit; but the only remedy he can suggest for those who do not practice virtue is force; and the State is to exercise the force necessary to educate or to compel the people to virtue. The presupposition of Aristotle's education in the practice of virtue is that "there must, therefore, previously exist a character in some way connected with virtue, loving what is honorable, and hating what is disgraceful" (*Nic. Eth.* x. 9).

We receive useful suggestions from the classic ethics concerning the moral methods in which the wise may be made wiser and the good better, but they shed little light upon the darker, abysmal moral question of our history, How shall a man born in sin be made whole?

Moral motive and help are to be drawn from utilitarian ethics. The chief service, however, of modern utilitarianism consists in its determination of ethical standards of conduct rather than in any contribution it makes to the dynamics of duty. A large and well-reasoned conception of human happiness, in which the personal interest is seen to blend, doubtless has attraction for minds capable of apprehending it. There is also a natural spring of moral motive in a magnified self-interest. Every man capable of moral feeling lives to some extent for the larger self, in which, at least, his immediate friends and dependents become identified with him. And this enlargement of self through processes of utilitarian reasoning may be expanded until it transcends the bounds of class, or country, and touches the ends of the world. But the weakness of this

method of expanding self-interest into a principle of general benevolence is uncovered by this keen criticism of Principal Shairp: "When the endeavor is made to combine with it benevolence, and to take in the whole human race, the motive is no doubt elevated, but at the expense of its power" (*Studies in Poetry and Philosophy*, p. 310. See, also, *Principal Shairp and his Friends*, pp. 247 *sq.*) This is obvious because in such ethics benevolence is not increased, like a stream, from its own exhaustless source, but rather the love of one's own happiness is stretched by force of reasoning until it is made to include a great number of objects; and the wider its artificial extension, the thinner it becomes, and the greater is its liability to break. Moreover, this moral motive is with difficulty refined from the prudential sordidness of its origin in self-interest. And even when a moral flame is kindled from such oil, it burns with a too dim and odorous light. A calculating ethics lacks spontaneity and sacrificial enthusiasm. Considerations of utility are by no means to be rejected as without value in motive; but they are poor materials for the flame of sacrificial love. The utilitarian calculus has its worth in the determination of moral judgments; but a table of moral logarithms would be a poor source of ethical inspiration. Much the same criticism may be passed upon the inadequacy as a moral motive of the conception of humanity, the so-called religion of humanity. Humanity in the abstract is not easy to be loved, at least by the generality of men. There is little influence over conduct to be drawn from the contemplation of a glowing cloud. It is ethically difficult to adore a generalization, and to obey a formula with all the heart.

An extreme, nominally scientific answer to the question of moral dynamics is represented in Mr. J. Cotter Morison's *Service of Man*. The idea of moral responsibility is to be got rid of entirely. "The sooner it is perceived that bad men will be bad, do what we will, though, of course, they may be made less bad, the sooner shall we come to the conclusion that the welfare of society demands the suppression or elimination of bad men, and the careful cultivation of the good only" (p. 215) "Nothing is gained by disguising the fact that there is no remedy for a bad heart, and no substitute for a good one" (p. 216). We do not deny the truth in this extreme reasoning that morality may to some extent be bred into the blood of the race; on the contrary, Christian training, we believe, tends to naturalize the gracious powers of redemption, to make men more naturally Christian. But a method of making virtue which "demands pupils who can learn" (*Ibid.* p. 219), and which condemns the bad to extermination, confesses its own impotence as a moral motive power for humanity.

Do we find in Christian ethics a sufficient motive power for life? Such motive must be simple, comprehensive, and efficacious. It must answer for all men and for all things of all men. It must appeal directly to the human heart, and to all the affections and capacities of human hearts. It must be broad as life and strong as the will of

God. It must show its vital force by the fruits of righteousness in every climate and under all conditions. It must prove to be a new creative and redemptive power in a sinful humanity. Otherwise it is not a sufficient "virtue-making power" for us on this earth.

We seek the answer to the question, where shall such power of godliness be found, first from the history of the Christian religion. Has it furnished a motive which has met the needs of men, which has proved equal to the stress and strain of life?

I. THE CHRISTIAN MOTIVE POWER IN HISTORY

1. The moral motives in the Old Testament.

The history of Israel, taken as a whole, manifests the presence and working of a moral motive power which made for righteousness, and which led the hope of the people on toward a Messianic ideal. Israel gained a power of moral leadership such as no other ancient people reached. Moreover, the moral power of the law and the prophets in Israel worked steadily against the natural gravitation of the chosen people downwards toward the idolatrous customs of surrounding communities; it lifted and held the heart of Israel, in spite of its natural grossness and hardness, up to the light of a high and holy ideal of righteousness and peace.

The moral motive, which shaped the institutions and led on the fortunes of Israel, was derived mainly from the religion of the chosen people. The mainspring of it was obedience to the will of Jehovah. The fear of the Lord became the dominant motive of life in Israel. The force of this supreme religious motive made itself felt in two main directions, — in regard for the outward ordinances of Jehovah, in the observance of the fasts and sacrifices of the law; and also in the maintenance of those "just relations," and the performance of those deeds of righteousness and mercy, which were worthy of the character of Jehovah whose will was the nation's law. The religious motive power in Israel gained consequently a distinctive and effec-

tive influence upon conduct, besides its ritualistic tendency.

The moral motives which appear in the literature of the Old Testament may be critically analyzed in the following manner: (1) Those natural impulses which are predominant in the earlier stages of communal life among all tribes on the way to civilization, are to be found in the biblical narratives of ancient Israel. Among these may be mentioned regard for the family (Gen. xxvii. 41, xliv. 30 sq. xxxiv. 25 sq. etc.); also the tribal sense, and later the love of the people and the land, the national sense (Ex. xxxii. 32; Jud. xix. 12); see also those passages which show David's respect for the King who is the Lord's anointed. Besides these should be noticed the power of ancient customs, which sometimes overruled more moral considerations (Gen. xix. 6 sq. xxix. 26).

(2) The distinctively religious motive of obedience to the commandments of the Lord. The will of Jehovah is to be obeyed, not because it is seen to be morally good, but because it is the will of the God of Israel, who has power to reward or punish, and with whom as their God the people stand in covenant relation (Gen. xii.). Acts are done to please God rather than from moral considerations (Ex. xxxii. 27 sq.; Num. xxi. 2; etc.).

(3) The will of God to be done becomes more thoroughly and consciously identified with the morally good. The religious motive, which in Israel had absorbed other motives, was itself moralized; Jehovah is the God of righteousness, and the object of the whole covenant, law, and promise of the Lord is to establish a kingdom of righteousness. While the prophets and the Deuteronomic law lay great emphasis upon the fidelity of the people to God, and thus, on the one hand, seem to exalt the purely religious motive of obedience to the will of Jehovah, on the other hand, they perceive that what God wills is justice and mercy, and that the purpose of Jehovah is to establish "just relations" among men. Hence, in the name of Jehovah the prophets rebuke the immoralities and social abuses of their times; the fruit which the Lord desires in his vineyard is judgment and righteousness (Is. v. 7); deceit and violence and false balances in trade are an abomination (Micah vi. 10–12); it is irreligion for the rich to have the spoil of the poor in their houses, and to crush the people (Is. iii. 14, 15).

(4) The motive of obedience to the will of God became still more deeply moralized as the elements of gratitude and love entered into it. The law is to be obeyed not merely from fear or in hope, but with a grateful sense of God's goodness and from love to his law (Deut. vi. 4–6; x. 12, 13). In the later Israel the law of God became itself an object of love (Ps. xix. 9, 10; cxix. 97).

(5) To these factors in the motive power of Israel should be added the prudence and reverence which characterize the Wisdom literature. The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord (Prov. i. 1–7); this wisdom is identical with a life of truth, justice, and goodness.

A critical review of the moral motives, which are to be found in the religion of Israel, has been made by Schultz in the *Studien und Kritiken*,

1890, *erstes Heft.* Of the prophetic period he remarks: "The motive of the fear of God receives through the new element of grateful love to him the character of moral freedom. The regard for reward and punishment remains living, indeed, as an impelling motive behind the whole tendency of the people: but it does not influence consciously the individual moral conduct. The end of God appears no more as arbitrary. It makes for the restoration of the just and benevolent commonwealth in Israel. All individual action is ordered in accordance with the principles of fidelity towards this end, of righteousness, trustworthiness, and goodness. The external and the ceremonial action retreat, or are ordered in fidelity to this end of God in Israel" (*Ibid.* s. 57).

Canon Fremantle maintains less critically that "the law of moral and political relations was also the centre of the theology of the Old Testament"; that "the law which established just relations between men was the central and inspiring fact of the Hebrew literature" (*The World as the Subject of Redemption*, pp. 67, 83).

This religious-moral motive of Israel was a social force which moulded the institutions, shaped the national character, and determined the Messianic mission of the chosen people. The social influence and national results of this motive power are to be studied in the Mosaic legislation, in the development of the prophetic teaching of practical righteousness, in the insistence of the Psalms on justice and compassion, and in the preparation of Judaism for Christianity. Its ethical power and triumph are conspicuously witnessed in the visions and the tasks of prophets like Hosea and Isaiah, and in the work of that noble succession of moral leaders and religious statesmen whose words of judgment and mercy, whose denunciations of social and political wrongs, whose fair pictures of ideal life in some future age of Zion's perfection of beauty, constitute the inestimable ethical wealth and glory of the Old Testament.

It has been justly remarked by Canon Mozley[1] that prophecy was "an architect and builder" in Israel. It was characteristic of the faith of Israel that, unlike the moral motive of all surrounding peoples, it possessed architectural genius and vision, and has proved itself to be a great power of ethical construction, not only in the laws and institutions of the chosen people, but also in the political as well as religious history of the world. It laid broad

[1] *Ruling Ideas in Early Ages*, p. 18.

foundations of law and righteousness upon which the modern nations should establish their institutions; it has built through the wilderness and over mountains a highway for the Lord. Up to the limits of its revelation and the possibilities of its historic environment, faith worked in Israel constructively and successfully, as no moral motive power has ever worked in the history of any other nation. The exultant patriotism of the Hebrew historian was justified by the ethical fruits of the religious motive of Israel: — "For what great nation is there, that hath a god so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is whensoever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?"[1]

2. The moral motive power in the New Testament was freed from temporary and Judaic limitations, and there is presented in the gospel a direct personal appeal to the common heart of humanity from the infinite heart of the revealed God.

Jesus' method of making men good was to bring the love of God home to their hearts. Jesus would draw men one by one to himself, and by his own interest in them make them feel that God, their Father and his, was personally interested in them. The Christ not only gave to his disciples the new commandment of love, he gave himself — and the Father through himself — to be loved by them. Hence the moral motive to which Jesus trusted in men, was the power of a new affection in their hearts. His presence made virtue possible because it inspired love. This is the "virtue-making power" of the gospel — love from God calling forth love to God in human hearts. It is "the expulsive power of a new affection" (to quote the famous title of one of Dr. Chalmers' sermons), and it is also the creative power of a new enthusiasm.

The effect of the new motive which Christ's coming brought to men, as it was to be observed in the characters and subsequent lives of the first disciples, was wonderful, as is the transfiguration of the earth in the holy dawn over

[1] Deut. iv. 7, 8.

the mountain tops of a new, bright day. All the disciples under the influence of Jesus become changed, living as new men in a new world. This observed change, so thorough, so profound, so comprehensive, and so permanent, would be an unaccountable miracle in the moral realm, did it not become natural again to our contemplation of it as we view it in its immediate relation to the Power whereby it was wrought, — we behold it as the direct effect among men of the shining of the one Life which was full of grace and truth.

3. This Christian motive power is to be studied still further in the continuous life of the Church and in the fruits of Christianity. It is to-day the known and positive power of the Spirit working in human hearts, moulding social life, reforming multitudes, and building noble institutions in all lands.

The conclusion that it is a sufficient moral power, that it works, that it meets life, that it carries with it inexpressible energies of good, is the broad and comprehensive induction which the experiences of countless individuals, and the reasonable assurance of eighteen centuries of Christianity in the world, warrant us in making. The Christian motive power is proved by experience to be sufficient to stir man to better life, to awaken all his faculties, and to move his powers harmoniously for their most productive activity. The Christian motives meet life in all its needs; Christianity fits life in its exaltation and its depression, in its heights and depths, and over all its common plains; and in its fitness to life, as it vitalizing atmosphere, there is ever present spiritual evidence of its divineness.

J. Cotter Morison forms an estimate from a very meagre historical induction of "what Christianity has done," and advances in his summary of its effects the following proposition, which may be taken as a fair example of modern efforts to reduce to the lowest terms the moral influence of Christianity in history: "That Christianity has a very limited influence on the world at large; but a most powerful effect on certain high-toned natures, who, by becoming true saints, produce an immense impression on public opinion, and give that religion much of the honor which it enjoys" (*Service of Man*, p. 177). This is an inversion of the objection against Christianity which was made by Celsus, one of the

first pagan writers against the new doctrine, that 'workers in wool and in leather, and fullers, and persons the most uninstructed and rustic, were the most zealous ambassadors of Christianity, and brought it first to women and children' (Origen, *c. Cel.* iii. 55). "Let us hear," said Celsus, "what kind of persons these Christians invite. Every one, they say, who is a sinner, who is devoid of understanding, who is a child, . . . him will the kingdom of God receive" (*Ibid.* iii. 59). The two objections, the ancient and the modern, cancel each other. It is true against Celsus that Christianity has produced "a most powerful effect on certain high-toned natures"; and it is true against the modern objector that many of the humble and the weak are called, — every Christian parish has its unknown saints. "There has scarcely been a town in any Christian country since the time of Christ where a century has passed without exhibiting a character of such elevation that his mere presence has shamed the bad and made the good better, and has been felt at times like the presence of God himself. And if this be so, has Christ failed? or can Christianity die?" (*Ecce Homo*, p. 185).

There are two marked characteristics of the motive of Christian ethics which lie plainly to be seen on the surface of Christian experience, and which distinguish the whole history of Christianity. One is the consciousness of power with which the Christian life is filled.

The great objection which Saul of Tarsus, in his Hebrew love of a religion of power, found with the new religion of the despised Nazarene, seems to have been its appearance of weakness and shame. He never could become a follower of a feeble faith, — a faith which had been put to open shame on a cross. He would have a world-conquering religion. And he found, to his immense surprise, in his vision of the risen and glorified Lord, that the religion of Jesus is the religion of power. Afterwards he said with repeated insistence, and as though speaking from the depths of his personal experience, that he was not ashamed of the gospel; and it became to the great apostle as he preached it, the religion of power, destined to a universal empire.[1] Thus true Christianity has always grown conscious of itself as the religion of moral power. A soul baptized into its spirit, gains a glowing sense of spiritual vitality. "We have not received the spirit of fear, but of power," — such is the Christian man's experience of the faith which has become the energy of goodness in his soul.

[1] See Matheson, *Spiritual Development of St. Paul*, pp. 32 seq.

It is faith in the strong Son of God. And the Christian Church, almost in proportion as it has the Spirit of Christ, is stirred with a passion for spiritual achievement, and goes forth with a missionary faith to conquer the world for Christ. Because possessed of the Spirit of power, Christianity has always been in history the Church militant, and also the Church expectant. It sings by faith in every age the song of the Church triumphant. The Christian motive power meets thus the test of missionary energy for humanity.

The other characteristic of the Christian consciousness of a motive sufficient for life is this: the Holy Spirit, from whence comes all power, is the Spirit of wisdom and love for common work and for everyday life. The Christian motive is not power only of aspiration for the rarer experiences of souls in the vision of God; the Christian motive is daily power of the Spirit for life's common uses. The Christian man is not irreverent, but true to his deepest experience of the Christian life, when he speaks of the daily help in common duties of the Holy Ghost. He enters into the communion of the Spirit in all places, amid all tasks, and no duty is too humble to be borne in the Spirit of his Master and Lord.

The Christian motive power is thus found to be sufficient under the other test of its transforming intensity for individual character and life.

II. ANALYSIS OF THE CHRISTIAN MOTIVE POWER

Our inquiry concerning the adequacy of the Christian motive for life has thus far been inductive from its observed operations among those who come under the power of it; we may proceed to understand the reasons of its proved practical efficacy by a more critical analysis of the elements of its power.

1. We discover in it the force of certain morally powerful truths.

All truths exist in potential relations to conduct, but they differ in the materials of motive which they present.

Some truths seem to be almost spontaneously convertible into the flame and energy of a soul. The truths of the gospel are pre-eminently truths for action, truths full of motive and light for life. They are peculiarly truths to be done. The Lord could speak of his disciples as doers of his word; for his words lead directly to deeds. The gospel is not revelation of abstract divinity — a science of celestial astronomy, but a near and present and urgent revelation of truths, divine and human, which ought at once to get themselves done in the lives of men. God throughout the Bible has his eye on character.

We find, then, in the simplicity and abundance of the materials of motive in the teaching of Christ and his disciples, one secret of the moral power which the Christian faith has in the world of conduct. Take, for example, its doctrine of divine forgiveness, its assurance of the atonement which has been made for sin. That truth may be treated as a dogma of our theology, and in its formal definition and discussion be held indeed quite apart from life. But as we find the word of forgiveness in the gospels it was a word of healing for soul and body.[1] It is the practical, human, ethical side of the truth of God's willingness to forgive sins that is chiefly presented in the words and the deeds of Jesus. And what truth lies nearer the springs of new life, what word from God can be so quickly converted under the influence of the Spirit into light and joy, as this truth of the divine forgiveness of sins which is the heart of Jesus' gospel to the world? Men have been lifted up and sent on to new lives of hopeful obedience by this gospel of the divine forgiveness of sins, as they have not been by all the moral philosophies which have been offered for virtue's recovery since the world began.

We might draw further illustrations of the richness of Christian theology in truths for immediate ethical assimilation and use from such doctrines as the Fatherhood of God, the divine thoughtfulness for the individual, Christ's hope for publicans and sinners, and other truths of grace,

[1] See the account in the gospel of the cure of the man sick of the palsy; Matt. ix. 1–8.

which abound in the New Testament, and which have entered as quickening and light-giving forces into the experience of Christian men. These truths are bread of life. There is no storehouse of materials for ethical use so rich, so exhaustless, so immediately convertible into character, as the New Testament. The epistles seem to grow and to blossom of themselves into the Christian graces; their great doctrinal trunk-truths bear richly the fruits of the Spirit. Their practical precepts are the direct ethical products of their truths of divine grace.

2. Not only by its wealth of truths which are convertible into ethical uses does Christianity prove itself to be moral power in the world, but also it moves men even more profoundly through the influence of Christ's life and example. The Christian man does not simply, like Plato's charioteer, lift his eyes for a moment's glance at the supersensible ideals above heaven's clear vault; the Christian beholds the heavenly ideals incarnate and personally present in the life of his Master and Lord.

With the first disciples who followed the Son of man, their motive of discipleship evidently consisted in the power of the personal attraction of Jesus of Nazareth who called them, and they left all and followed him.[1] Not only by his mighty works did Jesus awaken their Messianic hopes, but still more by his personal character and power the Christ commanded their utmost devotion, and led them up to Jerusalem where he was to be crucified. Jesus gained supreme personal mastery over his disciples. They walked with him, and came under the supernal spell of his character, and called him Master and Lord. The law of discipleship was the felt personal influence of Jesus himself. There is no other adequate representation or historic explanation of primitive Christianity than this: Christ himself in the midst of his disciples.

This personal presence and mastery of Christ is no longer limited, as of old, to the few disciples who go with him in the way, and see him in the wondrous beauty and the great peace of his pure life. There have been two

[1] Mark i. 16-20; x. 28.

eras in the coming of the moral motive power of Christianity; the first was the manifestation of the historic Christ to his disciples; the second, and the greater era, is the presence of the Spirit of Christ in the world. The missionary apostle, who had conversed with Peter and John — disciples who had been with Jesus in his earthly life, — and who himself had seen a vision of the Lord, turns not regretfully but with expectant and powerful faith to the new and more glorious dispensation of the Spirit, declaring: "Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh: even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more."[1] And corresponding to the light and the glory of the new era of the spiritual presence and influence of the risen and ascended Lord, the apostle sees will be the transforming power of the Christian motive wherever it is received: "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new."[2]

3. In the Christian moral motive power we discover, therefore, as its deepest and exhaustless source of power the working of the Spirit of Christ.

This is not a miraculous grace instantaneously changing sinful character into all perfection. It is a spiritual Power which works according to moral laws, and through the natural processes of human life. It is the personal influence of the Holy Spirit with the spirit of man. It is a divine co-working with the human according to the nature of man and the love of God in Christ. It is like the energy of the sunshine in the fruit; it is the life of the vine in the branches.

In Christianity the power of the Spirit may be said to have become naturalized both in the individual faith, and through the influences of social regeneration which Christianity evokes. The power of the Holy Spirit has become to a certain extent naturalized in the life of the Christian home, in the heredity of Christian parentage, in the gracious aids and customs of true Christian society. Infant baptism signifies, among other things, this truth of the

[1] 2 Cor. v. 16. [2] 2 Cor. v. 17.

natural inheritance of moral motive and spiritual regeneration into which the child enters by its Christian birth. The influence of the Holy Spirit in the Christian home and the Church is the power of the Highest let down into human life, and to be taken up in the processes of life, — the supernal moral Power, which, working with all natural forces, shall accomplish the ultimate perfection of the individual souls in which it dwells, and create anew the society in which it abides.

Christian ethics adds thus to the motive of life, in the hard struggle of the good with the evil, an inspiring hope of final victory and perfection. It lifts the burdening sense of failure from the best human hearts. It causes the Ideal to inspire us to ever new and noble endeavor, instead of mocking us by its unattainable beauty. It turns even our present imperfection into future expectation ; it blesses us in our conscious want of the righteousness of Christ. Its high commandment of virtue becomes sweet promise to the heart. The Christian Ideal, which has once for all been made real, and which has dwelt among us full of grace and truth in Jesus Christ, looks down upon us from out the heavenly glory with a most friendly aspect, and its gospel is a divine invitation to the weakest and the most sinful, speaking still in the strong, tender, human sympathy of the Christ, and saying, "Come unto me." The Christian moral motive power is motive for sinners, — it is power to save unto the uttermost.

In Plato's ideal State the moral problem arose, how should the soldiers and guardians of the city be made virtuous and courageous for their tasks? The dyers, so Plato argued, when they want to dye wool for making true sea-purple, begin by selecting their white color first ; then they prepare and dress it with no slight circumstance, in order that the white ground may take the purple hue to perfection. Whatever is dyed in this manner becomes a fast color, and no washing with lyes or without lyes can take away the bloom of the color. When the ground has not been duly prepared, the colors have a washed-out and ridiculous appearance. So Plato sought to prepare influ-

ences which should enable the guardians of his ideal State to take the dye of the laws in perfection; the color of their opinions was to be indelibly fixed by their nurture and training, "not to be washed away by any such potent lyes as pleasure, — mightier agent far in washing the soul than any soda or lye; and sorrow, fear and desire, mightier solvents than any others."[1] Thus in Plato's ideal society the perfect good can be obtained only for the choice spirits by careful selection of the material, and by still more painstaking processes of training and education. The wool must itself be white before it can take the perfect bloom of the sea-purple. But to the Hebrew prophet this word of the Lord had come with a larger hope and a diviner secret of grace for man's redemption, — "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."[2] Not through natural selection of the whitest wool for the dyers, but through the spiritual regeneration of a humanity stained with sin, the love of the Christ saves the lost, and He that sitteth on the throne makes all things new.[3]

As the Christian man lives in this power of the world to come, and, having fought "the beautiful fight,"[4] goes hence to receive the crown of righteousness, so likewise the Christian faith holds up for human society the ethical hope of new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.[5] The times and the seasons knoweth no man but the Father; there are greater works of faith to be accomplished, and there are before us in our generation unfinished ethical tasks of providence; but the Christian social ideal, in some sure world-age to come, is to be realized in the completion of the Messianic kingdom which the Christ shall give up to the Father. The kingly procession of the divine decrees moves on toward the thrones on which the Christian seer saw those unto whom judgment is given; the prophetic vision of the Christian centuries is uplifted to the city of God, the holy city, which shall come down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.

[1] *The Republic*, iv. (Jowett's *Trans.*). [2] Is. i. 18.
[3] Rev. xxi. 5. [4] 2 Tim. iv. 7. [5] 2 Peter iii. 13.

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